Bengaluru Monday, October 20, 2025 Pages 16 Vol 78 No 290 ₹7

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DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

India mess it up for third straight defeat

England punch their ticket to semis

Page 14

Socio-edu survey extended till Oct 31 in GBA limits

Teachers relieved from enumeration work across the state

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

With the Social and Educational Survey in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits failing to catch up with the rest of the state, the government on Sunday decided to extend it in GBA limits till October 31.

The survey will continue in GBA limits from October 23 till October 31 after the Deepavali break.

Other districts have fared much better, with 27 of the 31 districts witnessing more than 90% enumeration. In other districts and parts of Bengaluru Urban outside GBA limits, the enumeration will continue only if there are any leftovers.

These decisions were taken during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at his home office Krishna. Energy Minister K J George, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, Backward Classes Welfare Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi, Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, Backward Classes Commission Chairman Madhusudan R Naik, GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao and other bureaucrats were present.

As per the Government of India's estimates, Karnataka's population in 2025 is 6.85 crore. Till Sunday, the survey covered 5.97 crore across the state (87%). However, the figures rose to 95% discounting Bengaluru (GBA + Bengaluru Urban).

An enumerator at work in Bengaluru. DH FILE PHOTO

SURVEY STORY SO FAR

District	Projected population	Surveyed Population	% covered during survey
Mandya	17.22 L	17.96 L	104.29
Tumakuru	26.29 L	27.34 L	104
Haveri	16.92 L	17.50 L	103.42
Chitradurga	17.41 L	17.92 L	102.92
Udupi	11.33 L	11.55 L	101.98
B'luru urban + GBA	1.31 cr	69.41 L	52.61
State total	**6.85 cr**	**5.97 cr**	**87**

Source - Data from Backward Classes Commission

Teachers relieved

BC Welfare Department Principal Secretary Tulasi Maddineni told *DH* that teachers across the state (including Bengaluru) had been relieved from the survey, and that non-teaching enumerators will conduct the rest of the survey.

"During a detailed verification across districts (other than GBA), we saw that some people haven't been covered. Those people can inform the authorities. In case of such leftovers, the DCs will cover it through local employees. Online self-enumeration will be open till October 31," she added.

Survey crosses 100% in 7 dists

As per data from the Backward Classes Commission, Mandya saw the highest percentage of enumeration in the state (104.29%), where 17.96 lakh people were enumerated, though the estimated population of the district is 17.22 lakh.

▸ Caste survey, Page 6

Turbulence hits state's airports as UDAN scheme ends

VITTAL SHASTRI
KALABURAGI, DHNS

The suspension of flight services from Kalaburagi airport has put the spotlight on the struggles of regional airports in the state following the end of UDAN scheme, while raising a question mark over the future of new ones announced in Vijayapura, Raichur, Hassan and other cities.

Total aircraft movement from Kalaburagi, Hubballi, Mysuru and Belagavi airports plummeted by more than 60%, from 13,180 in 2021-22 to 5,372 in 2024-25. The movement of passengers also witnessed a decline, from 4,89,040 to 3,34,213 during this period.

The expiry of the Centre's Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme in 2021 is being cited as the main reason for the drop in traffic.

For the business community and other fliers, the end of flight services between Kalaburagi and Bengaluru from Oct 8 has come as a shock. Leaders from the region argue that the absence of air connectivity will affect growth.

TALE OF 4 AIRPORTS

Airports	2021-22		2024-25	
	Aircraft movement	Passenger movement	Aircraft movement	Passenger movement
Kalaburagi	1,619	64,507	541	18,632
Hubballi	3,778	1,42,517	1,770	1,27,997
Mysuru	2,738	72,937	724	38,692
Belagavi	5,045	2,09,079	2,337	1,48,892

> "There is enough passenger traffic from Kalaburagi to operate flights. But airlines are not providing flight service at convenient times, forcing passengers to switch to trains...
>
> **Sharanabasappa Pappa, KKCCI president**

"There is enough passenger traffic from Kalaburagi to operate the flights," Sharanabasappa Pappa, Kalyana Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industries president (KKCCI), said.

"But airlines companies are not providing flight service at convenient times, forcing the passengers to switch to trains including Vande Bharat Express. Elected representatives from the region should exert pressure on both airline companies and the civil aviation ministry to operate flights,"

Airport director Kishore Killampalli said flight services were withdrawn as airline companies cited lack of passenger traffic.

▸ Airports, Page 6

No RSS march in Chittapur as tahsildar denies permission

Cites possibility of law and order deterioration

KALABURAGI, DHNS

Police personnel conduct a route march in Chittapur town, Kalaburagi district, on Sunday. DH PHOTO

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) couldn't conduct the route march it planned in Chittapur, Kalaburagi district, on Sunday as the tahsildar issued an order Saturday late night denying permission for the same.

In a letter to RSS leader Pralhad Vishwakarma, who had sought permission to hold the route march in the home turf of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge, Chittapur Tahsildar Nagayya Hiremath stated that two other outfits — Bheem Army and Bharatiya Dalit Panther — had also requested permission to hold a simultaneous roadshow in the town, and there was a possibility of deterioration of law and order.

The official also stated that the decision was made based on a report submitted by police officials to prevent any untoward incident.

Bheem Army and Bharatiya Dalit Panther leaders announced the protest march condemning the allegedly abusive language used by some persons against Priyank after he sought a ban on the activities of the RSS on public premises.

▸ RSS, Page 6

HC asks RSS to seek fresh nod, Page 4

March held in Sedam

The RSS went ahead with its route march in Sedam on Sunday despite denial of permission by tahsildar at the last moment citing law and order issue. The police have taken hundreds of RSS men into custody.

Details on Page 4

Data centres face sustainability test

HYDERABAD, DHNS: India is gearing up to welcome data centres at an unprecedented pace even as communities in the US are resisting them citing sustainability challenges.

As of April 2025, India's installed data centre capacity stood at 1,263 MW, having grown more than fourfold over 6-7 years. The debate playing out in the US offers a cautionary tale for India.

Details on Page 12

RJD to face Cong in Bihar 'friendly fight'

PATNA, DHNS: Intensifying the internal war in the Opposition Mahagathbandhan ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls, big brother RJD has fielded a candidate against the state president of its ally Congress.

RJD's Suresh Paswan will face Bihar Congress president and sitting MLA Rajesh Ram in the Kutumba seat in Aurangabad.

At least 15 seats in the state are likely to witness a "friendly fight" among Mahagathbandhan allies.

Details on Page 7

Centre, Ladakh leaders to resume talks

SRINAGAR, DHNS: The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) – the two groups spearheading Ladakh's agitation for statehood and constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule– on Sunday announced that they will meet a subcommittee of the MHA on October 22.

Details on Page 10

DKS cautions IT giants against 'forgetting roots'

BENGALURU, DHNS: Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Sunday launched an indirect attack on IT/BT industrialists for their social media criticism of Bengaluru's infrastructure, warning them not to forget their "roots".

He made the remarks after a public engagement at Veera Yodharavana Park in Koramangala, where he participated in a "conversation with citizens" and listened to a flood of grievances as part of the 'Walk with Bengaluru' campaign.

"Those who started business using the facilities of Bengaluru and grew to a big level... now they are criticising and tweeting about Bengaluru," Shivakumar, who holds the Bengaluru development portfolio, said. "If you forget your roots, you don't get the fruit."

However, he welcomed the criticism, noting "it adds value to democracy".

Shivakumar confirmed that he, along with ministers Ramalinga Reddy, MB Patil and Priyank Kharge, would hold a separate meeting with CEOs of IT/BT companies to hear their concerns.

Addressing the infrastructure strain on the city, he announced a massive development plan. "For the comprehensive development of Bengaluru, we have prepared a plan of Rs 1.04 lakh crore in the next 3 to 4 years."

▸ DKS, Page 6

FRENCH HEIST

Paris reels as robbery rocks Louvre Museum

PARIS, AGENCIES

Thieves wielding power tools robbed the Louvre Museum in broad daylight Sunday, taking just seven minutes to grab some of France's priceless crown jewels, but dropping a gem-encrusted crown as they fled.

The heist unfolded around 9.30 am. Laurent Nuñez, the interior minister, told France Inter radio that the thieves had used a lift mechanism on a truck to break into the Galerie d'Apollon, a first-floor wing of the museum that houses a collection that includes the French crown jewels.

The thieves breached a window with an angle grinder, broke into two display cases and fled on motor scooters with their loot within just seven minutes.

The Apollo's Gallery in the Louvre Museum, Paris, where thieves broke in on Sunday. AFP FILE PHOTO

The hunt was still on for the four culprits, whom officials said were experienced and did not hurt anyone in the spectacular theft.

French authorities later said they found a damaged 19th-century crown near the museum. The crown once belonging to Empress Eugenie, the wife of Napoleon III, features golden eagles and is covered in 1,354 diamonds and 56 emeralds.

The robbery — the latest to target a French museum in recent months — forced the closure for the rest of the day of the Louvre, home to some of the world's most famous artworks, including the Mona Lisa.

It happened just 800 metres from Paris police headquarters.

▸ Jewellery, Page 6

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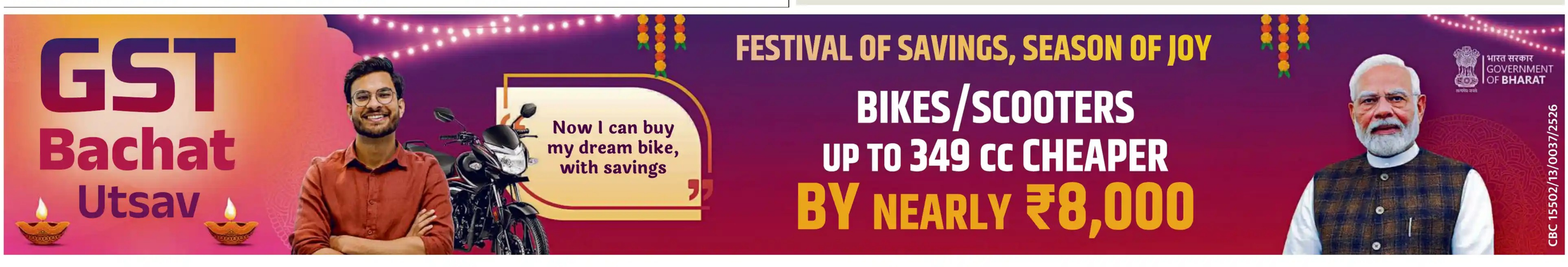
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DKS' guarantee: Ejipura flyover will be ready by June 2026

Residents remind him of missed project deadlines; urge fast-tracking of infra work

BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar inspects work on the Koramangala-Ejipura flyover on Sunday. PHOTO: DCMO

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has assured that the long-delayed Ejipura flyover will be completed by June 2026.

Shivakumar, accompanied by Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, inspected the project on Sunday, following his 'Walk with Bengaluru' programme, where citizens raised concerns about pending infrastructure works, flooding, and the growing drug menace.

The discussion largely focused on infrastructure bottlenecks in the Koramangala–Ejipura corridor, particularly the flyover project that began before 2019, stalled midway, and was recently revived under a new contractor.

Residents Nitin Sheshadri and Raghu urged the government to speed up land acquisition to accelerate progress. They also requested approval for a short extension from the southern end to Silk Board Junction to ease congestion near the narrow Madiwala Road landing point.

Raghu highlighted the incomplete Defence Linking Road between Lower Agaram, Intermediate Ring Road (IRR), and Iblur–Sarjapur Main Road.

Of the required defence land, only 5.34 acres have been handed over, while seven acres near Bellandur Lake to Iblur and 13 acres for the Lower Agram–IRR stretch are still pending with the Ministry of Defence.

Complaints for follow-up

- Sanitary and flood-affected areas under Bengaluru South City Corporation.
- Koramangala metro line and demand for a direct airport bus.
- Sewage Treatment Plant and garbage issues near Bellandur Lake.
- Shanthinagar Housing Society problems, along with issues concerning cycling corridors and footpaths.

He appealed to the deputy chief minister to negotiate with the ministry to secure the remaining land and complete the entire stretch "in one go."

Residents also raised civic and traffic concerns, including unauthorised PGs, vendors occupying footpaths, and illegal parking near Silk Board.

One commuter said his wife, who works in an IT firm, spends nearly four hours daily to cover just 8 km due to poor last-mile connectivity between Koramangala and the Outer Ring Road.

Flooding and civic amenity issues dominated the interaction.

While residents said problems in Koramangala 4th Block, Ejipura, and Rajendra Nagar had been largely addressed, they pointed out that Koramangala 6th Block and Ashwini Layout still face severe inundation. They sought funds for flood mitigation and a parallel drain project similar to the one built from Sony Signal to Bellandur Lake.

Rising drug menace

Dr Sneha, another resident, raised concern over rising drug use among youths and urged the government to organise awareness campaigns.

More than 100 citizens submitted petitions seeking faster civic action and direct government intervention.

OF BLOOMS & LIGHTS

Ahead of Deepavali, KR Market blooms with flower sales. (L) Lamps on display at Malleswaram market. Shoppers light up Bengaluru's streets, choosing festive decor to welcome the festival of lights. DH PHOTOS/ MS MANJUNATH & BK JANARDHAN

Special MEMU trains to Mysuru

BENGALURU, DHNS: The following eight-coach MEMU special trains will run between KSR Bengaluru and Ashokapuram (Mysuru) to manage the extra rush of passengers during weekends and Deepavali. These trains will operate on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until October 31.

Train number 06213 will depart from KSR Bengaluru at 12.15 pm and arrive at Ashokapuram at 3.40 pm.

Train number 06214 will depart from Ashokapuram at 4.10 pm and is expected to reach KSR Bengaluru at 8 pm.

The stoppages include Krishnadevaraya Halt, Nayandahalli, Jnanabharathi Halt, Kengeri, Ramanagaram, Channapatna, Maddur, Mandya, Pandavapura, Srirangapattana, Naganahalli, Mysuru and Ashokapuram.

Paytm Money scam: Techie duped of Rs 23 lakh

BENGALURU, DHNS

A software engineer from eastern Bengaluru has lost Rs 23 lakh after falling prey to cybercriminals who impersonated Paytm Money in a fake investment scheme.

The 40-year-old techie, Shantanu S (name changed), told the police that he was randomly added to a WhatsApp group claiming links with Paytm Money Limited.

"The group members appeared to be participating in block trades and receiving substantial profits. I observed their activities and, after researching block trades online, I decided to begin with a small investment of Rs 20,000," he told the police.

He was directed to a fake website where he registered and shared KYC details, unaware that he was being cheated. "I was persuaded to invest larger amounts, including subscribing to IPOs that promised 160% profit," he said.

He was later told that he had been allotted shares worth Rs 74 lakh and was asked to complete the subscription or risk a default, loss of credit score, and legal action.

As he could not afford the amount, the scammers offered an "interest-free" loan of Rs 35 lakh if he paid Rs 9 lakh upfront.

"I borrowed Rs 9 lakh through loans and paid, but when I tried to withdraw my funds, they demanded that I first repay the entire Rs 35-lakh loan," he said.

Shantanu then visited what he believed was the Paytm Money office on Sarjapur Road, only to discover that the company offered no such schemes.

He approached the East Cybercrime Police on October 9 and registered a complaint.

Retiree loses Rs 17.95 lakh under digital arrest

In a separate case registered by East Cybercrime Police on October 16, a 67-year-old retiree from Cox Town was cheated of Rs 17.95 lakh after being held under "digital arrest".

The fraudsters told him that his credentials were linked to money laundering involving the banned Popular Front of India (PFI). They also showed fake FIR copies and Supreme Court orders while impersonating Mumbai Police officials.

He was kept under digital arrest for three days and forced to transfer the money "for investigation purposes", a police officer said.

Munnekolala residents protest over bad roads

'If you won't build it, we will': Residents lash out at govt

BENGALURU, DHNS

Residents of Munnekolala in East Bengaluru staged a protest on Saturday, demanding the construction of a new road connecting Vagdevi Vilas School.

They said students were struggling to commute as the existing road was in a deplorable state and unfit for vehicles. Protesters also questioned how the government continued to approve new construction projects when the road itself did not exist.

Some participants wore T-shirts with the slogan #RebateTax.

"If the government cannot build the road, it should stop collecting taxes. We'll construct it ourselves," they said.

Munnekolala and neighbouring areas have been among the loudest voices against poor road infrastructure in recent months, particularly highlighting Panathur Road, Balagere Main Road, and Vibgyor High School Road.

Residents also pointed out that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) and the now-dissolved Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had approved several high-rise projects without ensuring adequate road connectivity.

They said the quality of life in the area was rapidly deteriorating and urged the government to look beyond central Bengaluru to address the civic woes of the city's growing tech corridor.

Walkaluru: Making the city's dirtiest spots walkable again

BENGALURU, DHNS: A citizen-government partnership has transformed the once garbage-ridden and urinated footpaths near Majestic and Maurya Hotel on Race Course Road.

The clean-up, led by civic group 'The Ugly Indian' with volunteers, BBMP marshals, and pourakarmikas, is part of the 'Walkaluru' movement to reclaim pedestrian spaces across Bengaluru.

The initiative drew attention after a video, posted by 'The Ugly Indian' on social media, showed GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao wearing an apron, mask, and gloves while cleaning alongside volunteers and senior corporation officers at Iblur Junction on Sarjapur Road.

This 'Walking the Talk' effort, involving BMRCL and supported by the Mahadevapura Task Force, has been hailed as a model for systemic civic change.

Walkaluru coordinator Arun Pai said the effort reflects long-term commitment.

"The BBMP is fully involved," Pai stated, rejecting suggestions of limited cooperation. He added, "We invest effort in daily maintenance in addition to the BBMP with local support and get daily inspection reports. This is a serious activity."

Pai said clean-up drives will continue this weekend from 8 am to 11 am. "Saturday we were in Dollar's Colony with 100 volunteers from the community, and Sunday in Iblur Junction," he said.

The neglected walkway near the railway bridge in Majestic.

The same stretch after the 'Walkaluru' makeover.

'From chaos to calm'

Residents along Sarjapur Road and Outer Ring Road (ORR) have launched a community-driven initiative this Deepavali to turn the chaotic Kasavanahalli Road into a safe and walkable stretch.

The project, 'Walkable Kasavanahalli Road', began at SJR Verity, Owners Court, aiming to move "from chaos to calm".

Key actions include installing dividers, high-rise pedestrian crossings, and pelican signals over a 500-metre stretch. In collaboration with NGO Saahas and agencies like the BWSSB, BSWML and Bengaluru Traffic Police, the community plans to tackle footpath encroachment and improve solid waste collection and CCTV monitoring. The plan also seeks better street connectivity between Choodasandra, Kasavanahalli, Hadosiddapura and Haralur, and new EV and minibus links for last-mile metro access.

Five B'luru students make it to 'Robotics Olympics' in Panama

BENGALURU, DHNS: Five students from government schools in Bengaluru are set to represent India at the FIRST Global Challenge, an international robotics competition to be held in Panama.

Dubbed the 'Robotics Olympics', the event will feature students from over 180 countries competing in a global challenge that combines innovation, teamwork, and technology.

Each nation sends a team to design and programme a robot to tackle tasks inspired by some of the world's biggest sustainability and scientific challenges.

The team members

The Bengaluru team includes Ningaraj, Parashuram M, and Arjun K Raj — all Class 11 students from the Government High School, Malleswaram, 18th Cross. They will be joined by their schoolmate Gouresh K, a Class 10 student, and GN Chandan Raj, a Class 9 student from AVD High School.

All five students were trained at the Amazon Future Engineer Makerspace, operated by The Innovation Story, after being selected through the ATAL Tinkering Lab at Malleswaram.

The competition, hosted in a different country each year, promotes STEM learning and international collaboration among young innovators.

Former minister and Malleswaram MLA Dr CN Ashwath Narayan flagged off the students' journey during a ceremony held in Bengaluru on Saturday. He congratulated the team and wished them success on the global stage.

A student from Embassy Public School, Magadi Main Road, secured the third place in the CISCE National Boxing Championship held in Madhya Pradesh.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Exhibition: Organised by Vachana Jyoti Balaga; Kalagrama, Mallathahalli; 9.30 am.

Exhibition: Mysuru style artworks; RG Singh, Srihari, Ramakrishna and Chandrika to attend; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishat, Kumara Krupa Road; 12.05 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with light rain

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	30.0°C
Minimum	20.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	91%
Sunset (Oct 20)	5:59 pm
Sunrise (Oct 21)	6:10 am
Moonrise	4:18 am
Moonset	4:35 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner. Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays.
Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @deccanherald.co.in

Taxpayers' money goes down the drain

In May 2025, the BWSSB replaced sewerage lines behind the Ragigudda metro station and filled the excavated area with wet mix after completing the work.

Now, the BBMP is desilting the drain, removing the wet mix entirely, and filling it with construction debris.

The BWSSB stated that its work is complete and declined to comment on the BBMP's actions.

This lack of coordination between government agencies results in a waste of taxpayers' money. Notably, sewerage pipelines on the same road were replaced and a concrete surface laid just two-three years ago, yet the road is repeatedly dug up for various works throughout the year, causing ongoing inconvenience to the public..
Murali Krishnan

Byrasandra park not open as promised

Despite an announcement by the deputy chief minister that parks would be open from 5 am to 10 pm without any break, the Byrasandra park is not following these new timings. I request the authorities concerned to look into this matter.
Srikumar Kumar

Sewerage spills onto road after drain blockage in Horamavu

Residents of 3rd Cross, Rajanna Layout, Horamavu Agara, are facing a serious public health hazard as sewerage flows onto the road. For the past three to four weeks, the stormwater drain has been completely blocked due to garbage dumping, causing sewerage to overflow.

The spill makes it difficult for residents to walk, and passing vehicles spread the filth across the street, creating an unhygienic environment that could lead to diseases such as malaria.

Residents have urged the authorities to clear the blockage promptly to prevent the situation from escalating into a more serious health crisis.
Darren Pinto

This can create an unhygienic environment that could lead to diseases.

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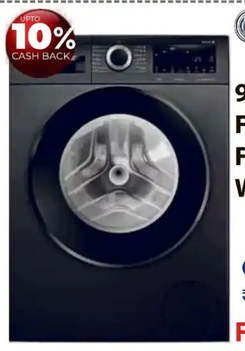

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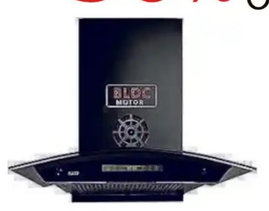

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IIMB placement sees 30% first-time recruiters

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) has concluded its summer placements for 2026, with strong numbers across sectors, including a 70% rise in healthcare offers and nearly 30% of recruiters participating for the first time.

The placement process for Post Graduate Programme (PGP) and Post Graduate Programme in Business Analytics (PGP-BA) 2025–27 cohorts ended with all 601 students securing offers from 137 organisations during the placement week between Oct 13 and 18.

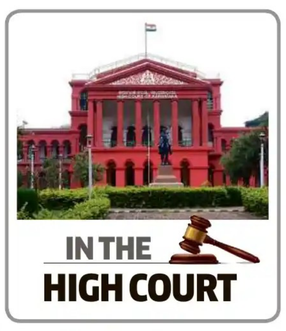
Students received offers across Consulting, Finance, Product Management, Sales and Marketing, General Management, and Analytics. Management Consulting emerged as the most preferred domain, accounting for 46% of all offers, up from 38% last year.

Investment Banking and E-commerce roles also saw significant growth, while offers in healthcare sector rose by over 70%, totalling 23 offers.

Tapas Ranjan Pati, Head of Career Development Services, said, "Management Consulting emerged the most preferred domain, accounting for 46% of the offers, followed by Investment Banking and Product Management. Legacy recruiters from Conglomerate, FMCG and General Management continue to hire in big numbers."

HC allows RSS to reapply for Chittapur route march on Nov 2

Directs authorities to consider fresh plea according to law



AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka on Sunday permitted RSS member Ashok Patil to file a fresh application seeking permission to hold a Patha Sanchalana (route march) at Chittapur, Kalaburagi district, on November 2.

Justice MGS Kamal passed this order at a special sitting.

"Such application shall be made to the deputy commissioner with copies to the taluk executive magistrate (tahsildar), as well as to the Chittapur police. They shall take into consideration the observation made in this order and the provisions of law referred to in the order and submit a report to this court on October 24, 2025, indicating the action taken by them in according permission to the petitioner and his organisation with specific reference to the routes, place and time. It is made clear no order is passed in this petition on merits or otherwise of the case. The same will be considered upon receipt of the report as directed above," the court said.

The petition had initially sought the court's directions to the authorities to permit the route march at 3 pm on October 19, starting from and ending at Bajaj Kalyana Mantap in Chittapur.

The petitioner stated that an application was filed in this regard on October 13 with the Chief Executive Officer, Town Municipal Council, and the inspector, Chittapur police station, seeking permission to install banners and hoardings across the route of the Patha Sanchalana by paying a fee of Rs 6,000. However, the authorities had not responded to the application, the petition said.

During the hearing, senior advocate Aruna Shyam informed that the permission to conduct the march has been declined on the grounds that other organisations — Bhim Army and Bharatiya Dalit Panther - also moved applications seeking permission to hold rally on the same day, at the same time and at the same place.

The authorities declined to consider requests of the petitioner and other organisations apprehending law and order problems, the advocate said.

The advocate filed an Interlocutory Application (IA) seeking to amend the petition, stating that the RSS would now like to conduct the march on November 2. The organisation is conscious and concerned about the harmony and maintenance of law and order, he added.

Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty, appearing for the state government, referred to a Government Order dated December 29, 2021 - Licensing and Regulation of Protests, Demonstration and Protest Marches, (Bangalore City) Order 2021.

He submitted that though the government order is applicable only to Bengaluru, the provisions and the mechanism contemplated could be applied to the rest of the state.

Justice Kamal noted that the state authorities are the best to take into consideration the ground realities of the situation and come to appropriate conclusions for the purpose and in the interest of maintaining public peace, order and tranquility.

He asked the petitioner to file a fresh application and directed the authorities to consider it in accordance with law.

Police detain RSS activists during a route march held in Sedam of Kalaburagi district on Sunday.

RSS holds route march in Sedam despite denial of permission

Commotion prevails as Swayamsevaks, public pick argument with police

KALABURAGI, DHNS

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) activists went ahead with their route march in Sedam on Sunday despite denial of permission by tahsildar at the last minute, citing law and order problem in the town.

More than 1,500 Ganaveshadharis had gathered in the town to take part in the route march which was scheduled at 4 pm. They started their march from Narmada College premises. But the police stopped them when they reached the main road. Tense situation prevailed as RSS activists picked up an argument with the police over the denial of the permission. The police detained hundreds of activists and bundled them into buses.

The members of the public condemned the police action. Commotion prevailed as they got into a heated argument with the police.

The police, however, released the RSS activists near the bus stand and taluk panchayat office. The activists resumed their Path Sanchalan and the march passed through various residential areas. The residents showered flower petals on the activists.

The RSS activists, joined by BJP leaders and public, argued that the RSS had sought permission three days ago, but it was denied despite no other organisation applying for any parallel march or procession.

Tahsildar Sriyank Dhanshri, in her order, stated that the RSS leaders had not obtained permission from the competent authority. "There was also a possibility of protest from Congress workers and Dalit bodies against the RSS route march and this would possibly disrupt the peace, law and order in the town," she said defending her decision to deny permission for the route march.

New B'luru-Mumbai superfast train via Hubballi: Joshi

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has assured him to operate a new superfast train between Bengaluru and Mumbai.

"Heartfelt thanks to the Central Government on behalf of the people of Karnataka for approving the long-standing demand for a Bengaluru-Mumbai Super Fast Train," Joshi posted on X.

The new train will run via Tumakuru, Davangere, Haveri, Hubballi-Dharwad, and Belagavi, Joshi said.

For the past 30 years, Udyan Express has been the only super fast train directly connecting Bengaluru and Mumbai, operating via the Guntakal-Solapur route.

There has been a persistent demand to introduce another super fast train via Tumakuru, Davangere, Haveri, Hubballi-Dharwad and Belagavi, to provide enhanced rail connectivity to the commercial hub of Mumbai, Joshi said.

The timetable for the new train is expected to be released in the coming days, Joshi said.

Route march: Priyank, BJP trade claims on social media

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The verbal duel between IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge and state BJP leaders continued on Sunday on the controversy over the RSS' planned route march in Priyank's home turf Chittapur in Kalaburagi district. The High Court asked RSS to file a fresh petition seeking permission to conduct the route march on November 2.

Priyank Kharge

After Chittapur Tahsildar Nagayya Hiremath issued an order denying permission for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's route march on Sunday, one Ashok Patil filed a petition in the High Court.

BJP state president B Y Vijayendra claimed that the High Court had "permitted" the RSS' route march and dubbed it a "victory of democracy."

"Those who sought to prevent the route march of the RSS have been embarrassed. Today's court verdict has shown that dictatorial administration is not possible in a democratic set-up and has taught a befitting lesson to those who talk about the Constitution each day," Vijayendra posted on X (formerly Twitter).

Priyank countered that the court hadn't permitted the route march but instead had just directed petitioners to file a new application.

"Can BJP leaders clarify when and where the RSS march is happening today? The truth is simple. The RSS event scheduled in Chittapur has not been permitted. The High Court has only directed the petitioners (RSS) to file a fresh application, which the state government MAY CONSIDER," the minister said in a post on X.

Extra ideological: Siroya

Taking to X, BJP MP Lahar Singh Siroya said: "When regime change within the Congress is being talked about loudly in power circles, Kharge Jr has become extra ideological. More ideological than his own father, Shri. Mallikarjun Kharge. He knows what pleases Shri. @RahulGandhi," Siroya wrote on X.

Pointing out that Priyank's father and AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge couldn't become Karnataka's chief minister despite being a veteran, Siroya said: "I hope Congress High Command takes note of Kharge Jr's enthusiasm, extra ideological faithfulness and rewards him handsomely. I hope he is installed as chief minister after Shri. Siddaramaiah steps down in the near future (November?)"

STRIDES TO THE SUMMIT

Devotees climb the Deviramma Betta for their once-a-year tryst with the deity at the summit, at Mallenahalli near Chikkamagaluru on Sunday. Many climbed barefoot along the rocky, thorny path to reach the shrine, 3,000 feet above sea level. Police, fire and emergency services personnel helped devotees climb the hillock using ropes.

Land mafia forges Bengaluru DC's signature to grab 1 acre in Yelahanka

BENGALURU, DHNS: The land mafia has struck again — this time by forging the signature of the Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner (DC) to create a fake order, prompting the Revenue Department to call for an inquiry.

Officials suspect the involvement of staff from the taluk office.

The case concerns one acre of land in Survey No 55 of Bellahalli, Yelahanka hobli. In March 2023, a builder and others had sought permission to use the land to construct a road connecting nearby properties.

The then DC, KA Dayananda, sought a legal opinion on the request, which revealed that the land was classified as gomala (grazing land) and was under litigation before the Supreme Court. In July 2024, Dayananda rejected the proposal and returned the file.

"All these documents are now part of a file. Despite that, my signature has been forged, and a fake order was issued to the taluk office, based on which a mutation was executed in the pahani (RTC)," said Dayananda, who now serves as Commissioner of the Karnataka Housing Board.

Inconsistencies found

The fake order cites a request by Sadananda G Baykod of G Corp Spaces Pvt Ltd and Bellahalli villagers, seeking the same land to build a road connecting nearby houses.

Curiously, while acknowledging the pending Supreme Court case, the order goes on to grant the land "subject to the outcome" of the case.

In a detailed complaint to Rajender Kumar Kataria, Principal Secretary of the Revenue Department, Dayananda pointed to multiple irregularities, suggesting possible collusion by officials at the taluk level.

"They had also come up with another fake order dated June 1, 2020, which appears to be forged as well. Those behind this may be trying to misuse government land to inflate the value of their properties. Criminal action should be initiated against them," he wrote.

When contacted, Kataria confirmed that action was being initiated. "I have directed the deputy commissioner to file a police complaint and ensure a thorough investigation," he said.

Forest dept's dilemma: Foster orphaned tiger cubs or leave them at nature's mercy

PAVAN KUMAR H
BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK (CHAMARAJANAGAR DIST), DHNS

Forest officials in Bandipur are fostering four one-year-old tiger cubs abandoned by their mother about 50 days ago as the department is not able to locate her.

Officials are feeding these cubs which cannot hunt on their own with road kills.

Guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) don't encourage such practices.

Wildlife experts highlight that this was against nature's rule of survival of the fittest.

However, senior officials say they are giving them a chance to survive by feeding them.

The recent deaths of six tigers at MM Hills seems to have played a role in this decision of the department.

The cubs are being monitored round the clock using drones, camera traps and watchers.

While in North and Central Indian tiger reserves there have been incidents of forest department feeding abandoned cubs and ailing adult tigers, such practices have not been followed in south Indian tiger reserves so far.

Wildlife conservationist Praveen Bhargav says tiger reserves were not zoos to feed abandoned wild cubs.

"The goal of conservation is to manage natural habitats with the least amount of human interference. This is another instance where wildlife conservation and animal rights part ways. If the cubs can make it on their own, that is fine," he says.

Activists say Bandipur has already reached its saturation level in tiger population and any human intervention in protecting abandoned cubs may only add to the conflict.

"As these cubs haven't acquired survival skills in the wild like hunting from their mother, they will be either pushed to the periphery to hunt easy prey or fail to differentiate between prey and threat," says wildlife activist Joseph Hoover.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) P C Ray says the decision to protect the cubs was taken after recommendation from a technical committee.

"Had we left them unattended, they would have died. We will provide them feed till they are able to hunt themselves. This may continue for the next five-six months," he said.

Bandipur field director S R Prabhakaran said the department was following what had been suggested by members of the committee, which has experts from NTCA as members.

"We only assist in feeding the cubs with road kills. The cubs have started hunting small mammals. As the intervention is minimal, the cubs have to still fight for their survival," he says.

As the abandoned cubs are in a safari zone, officials have turned the cubs' territory into an in-situ enclosure and is out of bounds for tourists.

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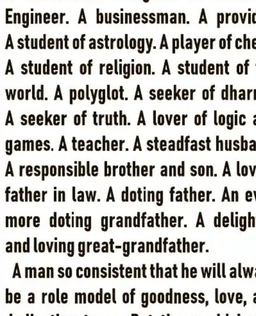

Kurian Varkey
(Pippy)
28.01.1948 - 18.10.2025
I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will praise my God to my last breath.
Psalm 104:33
Funeral Service at 10am on Tuesday, 21st October 2025 at Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Primrose Road, Bangalore and interment thereafter at Hosur Road Cemetery.
Lovingly remembered by Suja, Annu, Anit, Priya & grandchildren.

In loving Memory
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Sri G. B. Navale
Founder of San Engineering Company
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An eminent Water Works Engineer. A Structural Designer. A Chemical Engineer. A businessman. A provider. A student of astrology. A player of chess. A student of religion. A student of the world. A polyglot. A seeker of dharma. A seeker of truth. A lover of logic and games. A teacher. A steadfast husband. A responsible brother and son. A loving father in law. A doting father. An even more doting grandfather. A delighted and loving great-grandfather.
A man so consistent that he will always be a role model of goodness, love, and dedication to us. But the world lost a little of its warmth with his departure.

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CHANGE OF NAME
We, **Mohan Kumar R** S/o Ramakrishna aged 36 years and Ranjitha C W/o Mohan Kumar R aged 29 years residing at No.13,Behind Gopi School,Kamakshipalya, Meenakshi Nagar, Basaveshwaranagar, Bangalore-560079, declare that we are changing our Son's name from **Hithan M Gowda** to **Hevanth.M.** vide affidavit dated 08/10/2025 before notary Ratna.N, Bengaluru.

I RASHMI Jovin Chandwani aged about 32 years, W/o. Jovin Gerard Joy residing at No. 2/1, 2nd Cross, KSR Main Road, Horamavu, Bangalore-560043, have changed my name from Rashmi. N. Chandwani to RASHMI JOVIN CHANDWANI for all future purposes and documents vide affidavit dated 17/10/2025 before Notary G.B. Turamari Bangalore

Flood relief: Centre okays release of Rs 384 cr to state

HM approves advance release of 2nd instalment

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Sunday said it had approved the advance release of Rs 384.4 crore to Karnataka, as second instalment of the central share of State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) to provide relief to people who faced heavy rainfall and floods during this year's south-west monsoon.

In a statement, the MHA said Home Minister Amit Shah had approved advance release of a total of Rs 1,950.8 crore for Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Of this, it said, Rs 1,566.40 crore had been allocated for Maharashtra and Rs 384.40 crore for Karnataka, to help these states provide immediate relief to people affected by extremely heavy rainfall and floods.

The central government is fully committed to provide all possible assistance to states affected by flood, landslides and cloudburst, the statement said.

Standing crops on vast tracts of land have been damaged due to heavy rains and floods in parts of the state. DH FILE PHOTO

This year, the central government has released Rs 13,603.20 crore to 27 states under SDRF and Rs 2,189.28 crore under National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF) to 15 states.

In addition, Rs 4,571.30 crore has been released from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 21 states and Rs 372.09 crore from National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) to nine states.

"The union government has provided all logistic assistance, including deployment of requisite NDRF teams, Army teams and Air Force support to all states affected by floods, landslides and cloudburst. During this year's monsoon, there was maximum deployment of 199 teams of NDRF in 30 states/UTs for rescue and relief operations," it added.

CM recalls association with Jalappa on his birth centenary

BENGALURU, DHNS:

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday fondly recalled his association with former home minister the late R L Jalappa and attributed "a major share" of his political growth to the veteran.

"Jalappa had insisted with (former prime minister) H D Deve Gowda that I should be made the chief minister when there were discussions whether (former chief minister) J H Patel or I should become the CM. He had also suggested that I should become the finance minister. Because of this, I have presented 16 Budgets. If I have grown to this extent in politics today, Jalappa has a major role in it," Siddaramaiah said, while speaking at an event to mark the birth centenary of Jalappa (born on October 19, 1925) in Doddaballapur.

On the occasion, the chief minister inaugurated the Jalappa Academy, Jalappa Law University and centenary buildings and laid the foundation stone for the Devaraj Urs residential school.

He also released the book, 'Hrudayavantha R L Jalappa Jeevana Patha'.

"Jalappa is as much responsible as Rachaiah for me becoming a minister for the first time. Jalappa had foresight about the growth of the backward classes. Thus, he established a medical college".

He called the veteran a hearty man who dedicated his life for social justice. He used to give utmost importance to farmers and agriculture, the CM added.

Jalappa was a prominent figure in Karnataka politics. He left the Congress with former chief minister Devaraj Urs in 1979 and was with Urs in Karnataka Kranti Ranga. He later joined the Janata Party, switched to Janata Dal and finally returned to Congress in 1998.

Man 'kills' wife over 'affair', tries to pass it off as electric shock

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Hebbagodi police have arrested a man for allegedly murdering his wife and attempting to pass it off as an accidental electric shock.

Prashanth Kumar, 25, an electrician from Maragondanahalli, Anekal, was taken into custody for killing his wife, Reshma (32).

Police said that on October 15, Reshma's daughter from her previous marriage found her mother unconscious in the bathroom. She and neighbours rushed Reshma to the hospital, where doctors declared her dead.

"When questioned, the husband claimed that his wife had been bathing with an electric heating rod in the bucket and may have died due to an electric shock," a police statement said.

Reshma's daughter later told her aunt that Kumar had recently been quarrelling with her mother, suspecting she was communicating with another man.

"When she returned home from school around 5 pm, the house gate and front door were open, and the bathroom latch was locked from the outside. Upon opening it, she found her mother lying unconscious in the bathroom," the statement added.

Following this, the aunt approached the police, who registered a murder case.

On October 16, Kumar was arrested near Hosur Main Road. During interrogation, he allegedly confessed that in a fit of rage he assaulted and strangled his wife.

"To conceal the crime, he left her body in the bathroom and switched on the water heater. "Reshma had been previously married; her first husband died due to an illness within a year of their marriage. About nine months ago, she had met Kumar from Huvina Hadagali taluk via Instagram and married him," police said.

Grow more pulses, reduce imports: HDK to farmers

BENGALURU, DHNS

Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy has encouraged more farmers to cultivate pulses along with paddy or ragi.

"Cultivating pulses will help us reduce their imports. The union government has implemented many schemes for the agricultural sector," he said.

Kumaraswamy was speaking after inaugurating 3rd Biocontrol Expo 2025 and 33rd Foundation Day of The Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources (ICAR-NBAIR) on its Yelahanka campus on Sunday.

He said more farmers should come forward to cultivate pulses, along with crops like paddy to reduce the import of pulses.

The union minister said that bad quality of manure and fertilizers was ruining the health of both humans and the soil.

"Coconut farmers are in trouble across the state due to rhinoceros beetles. My own farm has been in trouble due to this insect," he pointed out.

The central government has implemented several schemes for the welfare of farmers and is supporting every area of the agricultural sector, Kumaraswmay said.

"In the 11 years of Narendra Modi's administration, most attention has been paid to the welfare and upliftment of farmers," the JD(S) leader said.

Shobha Karandlaje, Union Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Ministry of Labour and Employment, said farmers should take up organic farming. "The central government is emphasising on organic farming. Farmers, researchers and scientists are being sensitised about organic farming," she said.

The minister promised to expand the operations of the ICAR-NBAIR.

"We can consume quality produce when farmers grow healthy, chemical-free crops. So, we are looking at expansion of the establishment," she added.

Dr C N Manjunath, MP from Bangalore Rural, also stressed the importance of organic farming. "Human health depends on the quality of our crops and the fertility of the soil. We must use natural methods as much as possible," he said.

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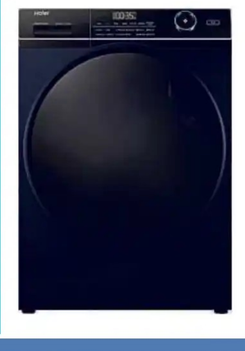
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Airport agencies need to be sensitised on arrest, detention of NRIs, says SC

'Ill-advised actions tend to bring disrepute to the country'

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has asked law-enforcement agencies working at international airports to exercise caution in arresting non-resident Indians (NRIs), as such ill-advised actions tend to bring disrepute to the country in the international fora, besides breaching human rights.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said any such step should not be taken in haste and must be preceded by an appropriate legal opinion and with a pragmatic approach. Terming the arrest and the FIR lodged against Rocky Abhraham — an NRI settled in Italy for the past 23 years — unlawful, the court also emphasised an imminent need to require the jurisdictional agencies at international airports to sensitise their officers in the prevailing laws before they took the drastic step of detaining or arresting an international traveller.

Abraham was arrested on January 16 here for possessing reindeer horn, which was subsequently determined to be a species not falling under the category of a protected or prohibited animal as per the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

On his writ petition, argued by advocate Wills Mathews, the court felt that allowing further prosecution of the petitioner would be tantamount to gross abuse of the process.

The bench referred to a recent incident at the Jaipur International Airport, where an octogenarian travelling from Dubai was detained and his pre-owned Rolex watch was arbitrarily seized on the grounds that it was a luxury good. Ultimately, the watch was found to be lawfully owned, the court pointed out.

The court allowed Abraham to avail a suitable remedy — seeking damages before the appropriate forum — if he so desired. Abraham, hailing from Kerala, was travelling from Italy to Kochi via Delhi for his annual vacation and to undergo knee surgery.

He was apprehended at the Delhi Domestic Airport and was allegedly found in possession of a deer horn. A case was lodged for violation of the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act.

He was granted bail on January 22, subject to furnishing two sureties along with a personal bond of Rs 50,000 each. He was also prohibited from leaving the country. He had to remain incarcerated for about 14 days as he could not arrange for the sureties.

He approached the Delhi High Court to have the FIR quashed and for permission to travel back to Italy. A forensic report was filed stating that the seized horn was of reindeer, not a protected species.

A trial court allowed him to go back to Italy on August 11 with onerous conditions, like he would have to furnish Rs 20 lakh, and would not visit any country except Italy.

He then approached the apex court, which examined his plea, invoking jurisdiction under Article 136 read with Article 142 of the Constitution.

NMC okays 10,650 new MBBS seats, 41 medical colleges

Overall MBBS seat count goes up to 1,37,600 for 2024-25

NEW DELHI, PTI

In a significant move aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge on Independence Day 2024 to create 75,000 new medical seats over five years, the National Medical Commission (NMC) has approved 10,650 new MBBS seats for the academic year 2024-25.

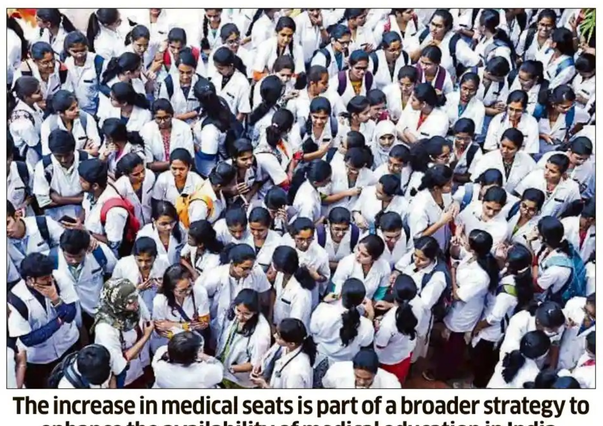
This increase is part of a broader strategy to enhance the availability of medical education in India.

The addition of 41 new medical colleges has also brought the total number of medical institutions in the country to 816. According to NMC Chief Dr Abhijat Sheth, out of the 170 applications received for expanding undergraduate (UG) seats, comprising 41 from government colleges and 129 from private institutions, a total of 10,650 MBBS seats have been approved.

This will raise the overall MBBS seat count to 1,37,600 for the 2024-25 academic year, including seats in Institutes of National Importance (INI).

For postgraduate (PG) courses, the NMC has received over 3,500 applications for new and renewed seats.

Dr Sheth stated that the commission expects an increase of around 5,000 PG seats, taking the total to 67,000 PG seats nationwide. The overall increase in both UG and PG seats this year will be approximately 15,000.



The increase in medical seats is part of a broader strategy to enhance the availability of medical education in India.
DH FILE PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION

While the final approval process and counselling have experienced some delays, officials have assured that these procedures will be completed within the prescribed timelines.

A blueprint detailing the schedule for accreditation, examinations, and seat matrix approvals for the upcoming academic year will be published soon.

Additionally, the portal for 2025-26 applications is set to open in early November.

Notably, Dr Sheth highlighted that this year marks the first time in recent history that all appeals against the Medical Assessment and Rating Board (MARB) decisions were resolved without any court interventions.

In an effort to enhance the quality of medical education, Dr Sheth also announced that the NMC is exploring the integration of clinical research into the mainstream medical curriculum.

Plans are underway for a collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to strengthen research infrastructure and promote clinical research in medical education.

The NMC's efforts are seen as a step towards improving medical education capacity in the country, in line with the government's vision of expanding healthcare infrastructure and addressing the growing demand for medical professionals.

NO RIGHT OF WAY HERE

People walk past a herd of sheep amid drizzle, in Chikkamagaluru on Sunday. PTI PHOTO

'Foreign firms being gradually allowed to acquire Indian banks'

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Congress on Sunday said foreign firms were gradually being allowed to acquire Indian banks, describing it as posing "substantial risks".

It also recalled that the Jan Sangh — considered the BJP's political predecessor — criticised then-prime minister Indira Gandhi for not nationalising foreign banks in July 1969.

The remarks came in the wake of Emirates NBD Bank — the second-largest in the UAE — expressing interest in acquiring a majority 60% stake in RBL Bank for Rs 26,853 crore. This is said to be the biggest-ever financial-sector deal in value terms.

Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said: "First, Laxmi Vilas Bank was acquired by Singapore's DBS Group. Second, Catholic Syrian Bank was acquired by Canada's Fairfax. Third, Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation took over Yes Bank."

He continued: "Now comes the news of Dubai's Emirates NBD acquiring RBL Bank. India's first full privatisation of a public-sector bank is expected to be completed in this financial year, and this is the sale of IDBI Bank. Foreign firms are gradually being allowed to acquire Indian banks. These imprudent moves pose substantial risks."

Sharing a clipping of a news report, Ramesh added, "Just as a matter of historical interest, the Jan Sangh criticised Indira Gandhi for not nationalising foreign banks in July 1969. This is a news report from December 28, 1969, after the Jan Sangh's meeting in Patna the previous day."

Caste survey extended till...

Caste survey, from Page 1

Tumakuru (104%), Haveri (103.42%), Chitradurga (102.92%), Udupi (101.98%), Chikkamagaluru (101.56%) and Davanagere (100.34%) are the other districts where more people have been enumerated than the estimates.

Bidar (89.46%), Dharwad (88.31%), Ramanagara (86.16%) and Bengaluru (Urban + GBA) with 52% are the only districts with less than 90% enumeration.

'6-9 pm campaign'

Even during the previous survey conducted by the H Kantharaj-led backward classes commission in 2015 and the statewide survey of Scheduled Castes (SCs) earlier this year, the enumeration had been lacklustre in Bengaluru. This time, the survey also began late in GBA limits (On October 4, while it began on September 22 across the state).

Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner, Revenue, GBA, said: "Enumerators are reaching around 30 houses per day. We have reached out to each house in Bengaluru but sometimes the houses are locked. So, we are now doing a special evening campaign from 6-9 pm over the last five days since people, who may have been outside during the day, will then be at home."

Moudgil noted that the evening campaign had reaped dividends and added that they would continue with it during the extension period (Oct 23-31) too.

DKS' fresh dig at IT giants...

DKS, from Page 1

This includes a tunnel road, elevated corridors, double-deck flyovers, buffer roads, illumination to increase the beauty of the city and installation of LED bulbs for street lights, Shivakumar said.

He highlighted the city's exponential growth, noting that Bengaluru now has a population of 1.40 crore, with nearly 70 lakh people coming from outside depending on the city for jobs and education, and 3,000 new vehicles being registered daily.

The immediate fund limit for every corporation commissioner has been increased from Rs 1 crore to Rs 3 crore. The five newly formed corporations have also been allowed to collectively approve works worth Rs 50 crore without a tender, with each corporation permitted to spend Rs 10 crore on works and the standing committee expenditure limit increased to Rs 5 crore.

In a move to regularise property records, Shivakumar urged citizens to take up the E-khata initiative, calling it a "big revolution". He said the 5% charge for converting 'B' khata to 'A' khata was not a "huge amount" and the process would double the property value without requiring any bribe.

Paris reels as robbery rocks...

Jewellery, from Page 1

Armed soldiers patrolled the landmark's esplanade, around the famed glass pyramid serving as its main entrance, while police teams were seen going inside. Evacuated visitors, tourists and passersby were kept at a distance behind police tape, while roads alongside the museum were closed off.

Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said three or four thieves had used the furniture hoist to steal "priceless" goods from two displays in the museum's "Gallerie d'Apollon" (Apollo's Gallery).

It was not immediately clear what items were stolen from the gilded gallery, which is home to the French crown jewels.

The Paris prosecutor's office said it had opened an investigation and the value of the loot was still being estimated.

Alleged caste bias in Pune college snowballs into political controversy

MUMBAI, DHNS

A Pune-based education institution's alleged caste discrimination against a former Dalit student has snowballed into a full-blown political issue in Maharashtra.

Premvardhan Birhade apparently lost a job in London after Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce's Principal Nivedita Gajanan Ekbote allegedly refused to verify his documents.

The Opposition alliance Maha Vikas Aghadi has slammed the Devendra Fadnavis-headed Maha Yuti dispensation over the issue.

Meanwhile, Ekbote has denied the charges and cited disciplinary issues involving the student, who is now based in London.

The alleged incident was first flagged by Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi founder and former MP Prakash Ambedkar, who is the grandson of Dalit icon and Father of the Constitution B R Ambedkar.

Birhade was "forced to forfeit a hard-earned employment opportunity at Heathrow Airport in London" as the college "refused to verify his academic credentials, despite his submitting all required documentation" because he was a Dalit, said Ambedkar — a politician, lawyer and activist.

He pointed out that Ekbote was also the Maharashtra vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, the youth wing of the BJP.

"Given her political and ideological alignment with the Manuwadi BJP, one can only imagine the extent to which caste prejudice must have shaped her actions against SC, ST, and OBC students in her academic career," said Ambedkar.

"The verification was provided when Prem had gone to London to study. When Prem requested the verification again for his job, the college asked about his caste! Prem's journey from the Nandurbar district to the UK was not easy. His case is a glaring example of how systemic caste discrimination continues to haunt Dalit youths, even after they break through enormous social and economic barriers," he said.

Ekbote said it was a serious issue of harassment, defamation, and deliberate misuse of social media by the former student. "He has been continuously posting false, misleading, and defamatory statements on social media, attempting to malign the image of the college, its staff members, and the principal," she said.

Birhade completed his education at the college "before my tenure as principal", she said, claiming she never personally knew or taught him.

Ekbote added that the college had already issued him three Letters of Recommendation and one Bonafide Certificate.

Recently, he approached the college again for an Education Reference for employment purposes with her signature, but it was not issued "considering his unsatisfactory conduct and disciplinary record as a student, and as per institutional policy," she said.

Maharashtra Congress president Harshavardhan Sapkal said: "This incident clearly shows that in the Fadnavis government's youth policy, there is neither justice, nor equality, nor any consideration for the rights of Bahujans."

Railways warns against fake news on social media

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Indian Railways has announced strict action against social media handles that are circulating misleading or old videos linked to train operations during the ongoing festive rush.

Such misleading videos create unnecessary panic among passengers, forcing the administration to enhance its digital vigilance enforcement, the railways said in a statement.

"There is a group of fake profiles on Twitter, and other such platforms like Instagram, YouTube, sharing images of overcrowding at platforms, trains and stations to create havoc," the railways said, adding that it has identified over 20 social media accounts for posting false or manipulative clips, and the process of filing FIRs against them has already started.

"When traced, all the posts were tracked down and identified to be old videos of previous years. The people who are creating nuisance over social media through sharing old videos are getting booked under the Railway Act, section 145 (B), in which the offenders may be punishable with imprisonment up to six months," the statement added.

The ministry has also activated a 24/7 social media monitoring mechanism to keep track and report such activity in real time.

The Railways have advised citizens not to share unverified videos of crowded stations or train delays and to depend on official communication channels.

Travellers have been urged to check updates through the verified social media accounts of the Ministry of Railways.

"No leniency will be shown to those attempting to mislead the public or tarnish the reputation of Indian Railways through the spread of fake, doctored, or old content. One such action has already been This action marks a zero-tolerance approach by Indian Railways against digital misinformation campaigns and reaffirms its commitment to ensuring safe, reliable, and transparent communication with passengers," the statement said.

No RSS route march in...

RSS, from Page 1

RSS activists had made elaborate arrangements for the route march and had installed Bhagwa Dhwaj (saffron flag), banners and buntings in Chittapur town. The municipal authorities removed them in the early hours of Sunday citing that the Hindutva organisation did not obtain proper permission for their installation. This evoked sharp criticism from BJP leaders who accused the minister of trying to turn his home constituency into 'Republic of Chittapur'.

In anticipation of the route march, Kalaburagi SP Addur Srinivasulu visited Chittapur on Saturday night and inspected the security arrangements.

RSS district convenor Ashok Patil, who has filed a petition in the Karnataka High Court challenging the denial of permission, said he would abide by the court's direction, which is expected on October 24.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at most places over Coastal & South Interior and at one or two places over North Interior Karnataka.
Forecast Oct 20: Generally cloudy sky.

INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	30.4	20.0	0.0
Bidar	30.2	19.0	0.0
Vijayapura	31.0	20.0	0.0
Dharwad	31.8	20.4	20.6
Haveri	29.2	22.4	0.0
Kalaburagi	33.4	22.4	0.0
Raichur	31.4	21.0	0.0
COASTAL			
Honnavar	35.2	23.9	5.0
Karwar	36.3	24.4	1.7
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	30.8	23.2	21.3

INTERIOR SOUTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	31.0	20.3	72.0
Bengaluru	28.0	20.8	4.6
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	--	--	--
Chikkamagaluru	--	--	--
Chitradurga	28.6	19.5	8.8
Davangere	30.0	20.5	0.0
Hassan	32.6	NA	41.0
Mysuru	30.2	20.0	17.0
Madikeri	--	--	--
Kolar	27.8	20.0	16.4
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	32.0	22.0	NIL
Kolkata	34.0	26.0	NIL
Mumbai	33.0	28.0	NA
Chennai	29.0	27.0	NA
Pune	33.0	21.0	NA
Hyderabad	28.0	23.0	NA
Th'puram	31.0	25.0	NIL

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TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Tender has been invited as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act 1999 for providing of Manpower services on out-source basis for the various Group 'D' (Security) vacant posts at Mysore Medical College and Research Institute, Mysuru and associated hospitals. The Tender documents may be downloaded from E-procurement website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from **17.10.2025** and last date for submission of Tenders through E-procurement website is **17.11.2025** upto **5.00 PM**. Those tenders which are not submitted with E.M.D. will be rejected.
If, the last date for submission of Tender treated as holiday, the next working day will be considered as last date. No Notification in this regard will be announced.

Sd/-Director and Dean, Mysore Medical College and Research Institute, Mysuru.
DIPR/DDMYS/1106/KSMCA/597/2025-26

State Olympics in Tumakuru

▸ **TUMAKURU, DHNS:** Tumakuru will host the State Olympics 2026 from January 7, district Minister G Parameshwara said on Sunday.

"Over 4,600 athletes will vie for top honours in 27 disciplines, including track and field, tennis, kabaddi and swimming, in the meet spread over 7 days at district stadium," he said.

"Our district has the distinction of organising sports meets very well. The state-level Kabaddi tournament is the proof," Parameshwara added.

Turbulence hits state's airports...

Airports, from Page 1

The situation is not that rosy in Belagavi as well. Airport Director S Tyagarajan said that of a total of 13 routes awarded to the airport under the UDAN scheme, only four - routes of Hyderabad, Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Mumbai - are currently operational.

The rest were withdrawn by the airline companies after the expiry of three-year tenure, he said, adding that airlines have diverted their flights to airports where the scheme is operational.

Hubballi Airport Director Rupesh Kumar said the number of passenger movements has held steady despite a reduction in flight operations post-UDAN.

"Flights are being operated to five cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Bengaluru at present. We are expecting more flights after the construction of a new terminal on 20,000 square meters, which is four times the size of the existing one. Flight services to Delhi and Pune have become successful even after the end of the scheme in 2021", he said.

At Shivamogga airport, where UDAN scheme is operational, the number of flights has jumped to 1,400 during 2025-26 in just one year from 817 in 2024-25. Star Air and SpiceJet are operating flights to Tirupati, Goa, Hyderabad and Chennai under the UDAN scheme by availing subsidies.

Flights from Bidar to Bengaluru resumed from April 2025. The service was initially suspended in December 2023 but has been relaunched with support from the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme from the government.

National Industries & Commerce Committee district president Amarnath Patil has written a letter to the minister of civil aviation stating that air connectivity is essential from Kalaburagi airport as per the special status accorded to Kalyana Karnataka region under Article 371-J of the Constitution.

"Kalaburagi airport has state-of-the-art facilities. However, the cancellation of flights has severely affected connectivity, economic growth, regional development and tourism", he added. Kalaburagi airport is now confined only to pilot training. Two private institutes are providing training to around 200 students at the airport. Around 30 Kalaburagi airport staff members are engaged in maintenance of the runway and other facilities.

BIHAR BATTLE TURNS INWARDS: Suresh Paswan to take on Rajesh Ram in Kutumba seat

RJD fields candidate against Congress chief

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

The battle for Bihar is fast morphing into a 'Maha' war within the Mahagathbandhan, as key allies turn on each other, sending a wrong message to voters.

In at least 15 constituencies, the Congress, CPI and RJD have fielded rival candidates. The RJD escalated tensions by nominating former minister Suresh Paswan against Bihar Congress president Rajesh Ram, a sitting MLA from Kutumba in Aurangabad.

Kutumba will go to polls in the second phase of elections for 122 seats on November 11. The last date for filing nomination papers is October 20.

A protege of Rahul Gandhi, Rajesh Ram expressed anguish over RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav's decision to field its candidate against him. Without naming Tejashwi, Ram took to social media to voice his frustration. "Dalit has neither bent, nor will ever bend. Time for Inquilab. Jai Congress," he posted.

Tejashwi, reportedly upset with the Congress for not naming him as the Mahagathbandhan's chief ministerial face, is believed to hold Rajesh Ram responsible for the party's reluctance to endorse his candidature.

Meanwhile, former Union minister and senior Congress MP Tariq Anwar voiced his dismay over the party's ticket distribution process.

"Candidates like Gajanand Sahi, who lost to JD(U)'s Sudarshan Kumar by just 113 votes in the 2020 Assembly election, were denied tickets, while those who suffered heavy defeats have been retained," Anwar said.

Congress spokesperson Anand Madhav, who also heads the party's research wing, resigned after being denied a ticket. In a letter to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Madhav wrote: "The Congress will struggle to win even 10 seats the way tickets have been distributed this time," alleging that "everyone in Bihar knows Congress tickets are up for sale".

Madhav's resignation came days after dramatic scenes at Patna airport, where angry Congress supporters reportedly tried to confront Rajesh Ram and party affairs in-charge Krishna Allavaru.

'MAHA' MESS

- Mahagathbandhan allies clash in at least 15 constituencies
- Tejashwi reportedly upset with Cong for not naming him Mahagathbandhan's CM face
- Congress spokesperson resigns, alleges tickets are 'up for sale'

Madan Sah, who claimed that he has been associated with RJD for a long time, reacted emotionally after being denied a ticket for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections in Patna on Sunday. High drama unfolded outside RJD president Lalu Prasad's residence as Sah broke down, tore off his clothes and rolled on the road in protest. PTI

BIHAR VOTES

Margins that mattered: 2020

The size of votes required for victory varied drastically across constituencies

Only 29 candidates won with a majority vote share of 50%

20 candidates managed to win despite securing less than a third of the total votes

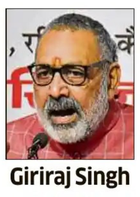
HIGHEST
61.39%
Manoj Manzil (CPI (ML) (L) from Agiaon won with 61.39% of the total votes

LOWEST
24.01%
Sumit Kumar Singh (IND) from Chakai won with just 24.01% of the total votes

Source: ECI

Union Minister sparks row with 'namak haram' remark

PATNA, PTI: Union minister Giriraj Singh has once again courted controversy by making a scathing remark against a minority community, saying that he does not need the votes of 'namak haraams' (betrayers).



Giriraj Singh

Speaking at a rally in Bihar's Arwal district on Saturday, the BJP MP from Begusarai said, "Once I asked a 'maulvi' (cleric) whether he had an Ayushman Bharat health card, and he replied in the affirmative. I asked whether such cards were distributed based on Hindu-Muslim, and he replied in the negative."

"When I asked him whether he had voted for me, he replied in the affirmative, but when I asked him to swear on Khuda (God), he said no, he didn't. Muslims take the benefits of all central schemes but don't vote for us... Such people are called 'namak haraam'. I told maulvi sahab that I don't want votes of 'namak haraams'," he added.

The BJP leader also said that he asked the Muslim cleric whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi had abused him, to which he replied in the negative.

"I also asked him whether I had insulted him, to which he said 'no'. Then I asked him what my fault was that he did not vote for me. Someone who doesn't acknowledge kindness is called 'namak haraam'," the minister said.

Echoing a similar view, JD(U) spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said, "It is true that the centre never discriminates in the distribution of welfare measures to the beneficiaries... Still, it does not get the votes of a particular community... This is certainly a matter of concern. As far as language and the terminology used in his (Giriraj Singh) speech is concerned, he is free to use words as per his choice."

'Well-known fact'

Reacting to Singh's statement, RJD state unit spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwary said, "It's a well-known fact that BJP leaders can't say anything except Hindu-Muslim. They can't talk about growing unemployment, price hike, better education and medical facilities... Whenever you talk to them about development, they start discussions on Hindu-Muslim issues and try their best to divert the attention from core issues."

'British supporters'

Independent Lok Sabha MP from Purnea, Pappu Yadav, slammed Singh for his comments. "Giriraj babu must tell us the names of those who supported the British during India's freedom struggle."

"Those who supported the British should be called 'namak haraam'. All those individuals and organisations who supported the enemy (British) during the freedom movement must be identified," he added.

Bihar, JNU and politics — a unique love story

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Bihar and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) are of the same vein when it comes to their love for politics and electoral battles.

Not one but two JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) presidents — they held the post 30 years apart — are contesting in the upcoming Bihar Assembly polls, while another, who is not in the fray, will campaign for them.

Shakeel Ahmad Khan (60), a two-term MLA who was the JNUSU president in 1992-93, will contest from the Kadwa seat on a Congress ticket for a third time, having won it twice. Meanwhile, Dhananjay (29), who is pursuing a PhD in theatre studies and was the JNUSU president in 2023-24, will make his electoral debut from Bhorey on a CPI(ML)L ticket, where the party lost by just 462 votes last time.

The Congress' Kanhaiya Kumar, who was the JNUSU president in 2015-16 and fought the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha polls, will campaign for them as well as other I.N.D.I.A-bloc candidates.

Dhananjay is the fourth JNUSU president to fight an election after Khan, Kumar, and Aishe Ghosh, who fought the 2021 Assembly elections on a CPM ticket.

Khan, who entered student politics through the SFI and became the JNUSU president before crossing over to the Congress, won from Kadwa in 2015 and 2020 and was the Congress Legislature Party leader in the Assembly.

Meanwhile, Dhananjay has been fielded from a seat which the CPI(ML)L lost in a close battle last time: The JD(U)'s Sunil Kumar defeated Jitendra Paswan, who has not been fielded because he is facing what the party says are fake cases. The party initially contemplated fielding him from Gaya, but chose Bhorey as negotiations with the RJD did not have a positive conclusion.

Sources said the CPI(ML)L was a part of the struggle of the lower castes and the marginalised in the area for a long time. "It is in this tradition that Dhananjay has been fielded. It was only because of Paswan's growing acceptability that a fake case was filed against him," a senior leader said.

Candidature chaos in JD(U)

The JD(U) faced embarrassment on Sunday after withdrawing Sabir Ali's candidature from the Amour assembly seat in favour of Saba Zafar, who had already filed his nomination on the party's ticket.

Ali, expelled from the JD(U) in 2014, was suddenly named the candidate on Saturday, surprising party workers. Zafar, a former BJP MLA and runner-up in the last election, had been listed as the official JD(U) candidate last week.

"Ali saheb rejoined to strengthen the party in Seemanchal. I filed my nomination yesterday and was never asked to withdraw," said Zafar.

EC directs observers to visit all polling stations

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Election Commission on Sunday said it has instructed election observers to visit all polling stations in Bihar and seats where bypolls are held to ensure that facilities provided to voters for easy voting are implemented.

The poll body has deployed 121 general observers and 18 police observers for Phase 1 and 122 general observers along with 20 police observers for Phase 2 of the Bihar Assembly elections. Eight general and eight police observers have also been deployed in the ongoing bypolls in eight assembly constituencies in seven states.

In a statement, the EC has said that all observers have completed their first round of visits to their constituencies and are stationed in their respective constituencies. It has instructed the observers to closely monitor the entire election process and ensure a transparent, free and fair conduct of elections.

They have also been instructed to visit polling stations and ensure the implementation of recent initiatives taken by the Commission to facilitate voter convenience.

Observers are also deployed in Budgam and Nagrota (Jammu and Kashmir), Anta (Rajasthan), Ghatsila (Jharkhand), Jubilee Hills (Telangana), Tarn Taran (Punjab), Dampa (Mizoram) and Nuapada (Odisha), where bypolls are being held.

96L bogus voters added to Maha voters' list: Raj

MUMBAI, DHNS: MNS chief Raj Thackeray on Sunday alleged that 96 lakh bogus voters have been added to Maharashtra's voters list by the Election Commission.

Raj Thackeray

Raj asked the EC to "purify" the rolls and not to proceed with the state local body polls till it was done to the satisfaction of all the political parties.

Addressing a meeting, Raj said: "If elections are held by rigging the voters' list, then it is the biggest insult to electors... You vote or do not vote... the match is fixed... the result is decided..."

"An attempt is being made to finish regional parties... I have learnt that 96 lakh fake voters have been enrolled in the voters' list in Maharashtra for the upcoming polls. They had also done this ahead of the 2024 Vidhan Sabha polls," alleged Raj.

He said that 8 to 10 lakh fake voters have been added in Mumbai and 8 to 8.5 lakh in Thane, Pune, and Nashik.

"The arithmetic itself is compromised, and now they are making criticism, saying that so-and-so has not won a single seat... Everyone knows how they won the elections," he said, attacking the BJP, Shiv Sena and NCP.

AIMIM releases 25 names

PATNA, PTI: The Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM, which had vowed to contest "100 seats" in Bihar upon being spurned by the I.N.D.I.A bloc, on Sunday, announced 25 candidates, including two non-Muslims.

The list, which includes the name of Akhtarul Iman, the state AIMIM chief and its lone MLA in Bihar, was shared by the party on X. Iman has been renominated from Amour.

Most of the seats contested by the party fall, predictably, in the Seemanchal region, the state's flood-prone north-eastern part, which has a high percentage of the Muslim population.

'BJP sidelining Nitish in quiet JD(U) takeover; it's a coup'

The I.N.D.I.A bloc constituents appear to be heading for a 'friendly contest' in a dozen seats in poll-bound Bihar. In conversation with **Sumit Pande**, CPI(ML) Liberation General Secretary **Dipankar Bhattacharya**, whose party has been allocated 20 seats, says the Opposition parties plan to release a common minimum programme, even as he accuses the BJP of engineering a "coup" to capture Nitish Kumar's JD(U).

Are you satisfied with the seat allocation?

We were looking at probably a slightly bigger number, at least another six seats. But considering the size of the coalition, we have one new entrant, which is the VIP, and a couple of other small parties, like IIP, in the coalition. So, we settled for 20. I hope whatever glitches are still there will be sorted out by the time of withdrawal of nominations.

Former JNU student union president and CPI(ML) leader Chandrashekhar, who was very active in Siwan in the 90s, was allegedly murdered by people considered close to former MP Shahabuddin, whose son is now contesting on the RJD ticket.

Scan to watch full interview

See, this is a party's choice. Shahabuddin was sent to jail and served his punishment; and he is no more anyway. Chandrashekhar is a leader we remember with great respect. He was one of those remarkable student leaders who had the clarity of vision in 1995-96 that India was at a crossroads, and one road led to a Hindu Rashtra, and if that happened, our democracy and our Constitution would be finished.

Do you think the momentum you built over the SIR and other issues seems to have dissipated?

There is a bit of a misconception. The SIR remains a major concern. If you look at the 2024 mandate, especially the results from Uttar Pradesh, you can see how the defence of the Constitution became such a major part of their agenda. The SIR also concerns people's right to vote.

Will there be a joint manifesto of the I.N.D.I.A bloc?

I think there will be one. It remains to be seen whether we call it a manifesto or a common minimum programme. If some of our major concerns are not included, we will also have a supplementary manifesto.

NDA ministers say the CM would be decided by MLAs after the elections. Does it have an impact on the communities that Nitish has mobilised?

There are several indications that the BJP is eyeing a complete capture of power in Bihar. Nitish has been gradually eased out over the past several months and is no longer the commanding centre in the NDA's scheme of things. This time, the BJP made it a point to tell in so many words that we are on equal level: 101 seats for the BJP and 101 for the JD(U).

In fact, it is like JD(U)'s 101 versus 142 of team BJP. Team BJP includes BJP, LJP and other smaller parties. There is a kind of takeover of the JD(U) from within by the BJP. It's a coup of sorts.

BJP is banking on cash transfer schemes for women.

The Rs 10,000 scheme was seen as a potential master stroke. But now, Amit Shah says that it is not free money, but seed money for a bigger loan. So, women in Bihar are concerned.

Uttar Pradesh DyCMs skip Ayodhya event, fuel rift talk

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a major political development indicating unrest within the Yogi Adityanath government, Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak on Sunday skipped the much-touted "deepotsav" (lamp festival) Diwali celebration in Ayodhya. They were reportedly upset over the omission of their names from the government advertisement released for the occasion.

The event set a record of sorts with the lighting of 26 lakh earthen lamps.

The advertisement published on Saturday featured Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Adityanath, and the names of Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh. They did not feature the two DyCMs.

Sources in the Information Department said Shahi was the district in-charge, while Singh's ministry organised the event, and hence their names were there.

Interestingly, Maurya — the BJP's co-in-charge for the upcoming Bihar Assembly polls — travelled to Lucknow from Patna to take part in the "deepotsav", but did not end up going to Ayodhya.

Sources said the two DyCMs were "upset" at being "ignored" in government programmes, while some other ministers appeared in almost every government event.

Oppn latches on

While state BJP leaders sought to downplay Maurya and Pathak's absence, the Samajwadi Party and the Congress in the Opposition perceived it as "increasing resentment" among ministers over the CM's "style of functioning".

The Opposition's charge might have been based on the time when Maurya, an influential OBC leader, sought to capitalise on party workers' resentment and openly declared that he would not hesitate in making sacrifices for their interests.

Maurya's remarks came after some party MLAs voiced their resentment with the CM's style of functioning. The matter reached the BJP high command, who intervened to resolve it.

RESILIENT RISE

From shutdowns to startups: Kashmir flips the script

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

VALLEY VISION

- The J&K Startup Policy aims for 2,000 startups by 2027
- University of Kashmir mentors dozens of young founders
- Innovation spans saffron, walnut wood, trout farminga and medicinal plants

Once synonymous with shutdowns, stone-pelting and hartals, Kashmir is now quietly scripting a new narrative — one driven by startups.

Across the Valley, a generation shaped by conflict is turning towards innovation and entrepreneurship, transforming challenges into opportunities and redefining what it means to grow up in a region long marked by turmoil.

Official data reveals that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a sharp rise in entrepreneurial activity. Nearly 1,000 startups were registered under the Startup India initiative by the end of 2024, a remarkable leap from just a few hundred four years ago. The newly notified J&K Startup Policy 2024-27 aims to take the number to 2,000 by 2027, offering incentives, incubation support, and funding for emerging ventures.

"Startups are becoming the new language of hope in Kashmir," said an official at the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

The University of Kashmir has emerged as one of the most active incubation centres.

At its helm is Prof Irfana Rashid, often described as the Startup Sherpa.

"For years, I taught entrepreneurship in classrooms," Irfana told *DH*. "Now, I finally get to bring those lessons to life."

Her approach blends academic mentorship with a deep understanding of local context. She identifies sectors such as saffron, walnut wood, trout farming, medicinal plants, agritech, and tourism as Kashmir's next frontiers for innovation.

For many, the journey from curfewed streets to co-working spaces has been both personal and political. Young founders recall days when internet shutdowns would cripple operations, yet resilience became their biggest resource.

"There was a time when we only thought of government jobs," said one Srinagar-based entrepreneur running an eco-friendly packaging startup. "Now, my startup employs 12 people — that's 12 more who don't need to leave the Valley to find work."

The startup movement may not yet have the scale of Bengaluru or Hyderabad, but its symbolic value in Kashmir is immense. It reflects a generational shift from grievance to growth.

Zubeen case, ST status row add to BJP's troubles in Assam

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

PRE-POLL HURDLES

- BJP's core vote banks, ethnic communities and tea workers, show signs of unrest
- ST status promise to six communities remains unfulfilled
- Party insiders fear backlash if Zubeen case not resolved soon

Amid mounting criticism over the investigation into singer Zubeen Garg's sudden death, Assam's ruling BJP is grappling with multiple challenges ahead of the Assembly elections—from uncertainty over its ties with ally UPPL to growing unrest among ethnic communities and tea garden voters, compounded by the resignation of senior leader Rajen Gohain.

While the state government continues to face heat from the Opposition parties over the Zubeen case, two major protests have added to the pressure: one by six ethnic tribes demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, and another by tea garden workers seeking a hike in daily wages across Assamese-majority eastern and north Assam.

The six ethnic communities, including the sizeable tea garden workforce, have long been key vote banks for the BJP, especially in eastern and north Assam, where Muslim votes are negligible. Since 2014, the BJP's anti-immigrant narrative has resonated strongly with these groups, driving their electoral support.

However, the party's failure to deliver on its promise of granting ST status to six communities (Ahom, Moran, Mottok, Chutia, Koch Rajbongshi and the Adivasis) has sparked resentment. The BJP had promised ST status ahead of the 2014 LS elections.

By capitalising on anti-immigrant sentiment, the BJP formed its first government in Assam in 2016. A party insider warned that if the demands for ST status and wage hikes are not addressed, its prospects among ethnic communities could be affected. They also want an early closure to Zubeen's case to avoid the public sentiments turning against the BJP in the 2026 polls.

Kerala will join PM SHRI scheme: State minister

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PTI: Kerala General Education Minister V Sivankutty on Sunday announced that the state will join the PM SHRI scheme to get the due central funds, but asserted that it would not backtrack from the existing educational policy in the state.

While CPI, an important constituent of the ruling LDF, expressed reservations about this policy shift, its representative in the ministry, Revenue Minister K Rajan, said the matter was not discussed in the cabinet.

BJP welcomed the minister's announcement and slammed the government's "two years of unnecessary opposition" before joining the scheme. The party's state chief Rajiv Chandrasekhar termed the government's change of heart as "CPM's admission that the Centre's stand and National Education Policy were correct".

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Maoist extremism on a steady decline

The mass surrender by Maoists in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh last week is seen as an important sign of the continuing decline of left wing extremism in the country. Mallojula Venugopal Rao alias Bhupathi, a top level leader, and 60 of his associates laid down arms before Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in Gadchiroli district. As many as 78 Maoists, including 43 women, surrendered in three districts of Chhattisgarh. Bhupathi was a founding member of the banned People's War Group. He had some months ago expressed the desire to abandon armed struggle against the state. As many as 1,639 cadres are reported to have surrendered this year. A large number of leaders and cadres have been eliminated in the operations launched by the security forces. Much of the left wing extremism in the country had over the years been confined to the forests in southern Chhattisgarh and nearby areas. It has steadily weakened there.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has declared that Maoism will be eradicated in the country by March 31, 2026. The security forces have been on the offensive in the last few months, inflicting serious damage on the Maoists. The Maoist threat, which former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had described as the ''greatest security threat to the nation", had peaked in the 2000s. The weakening of the movement since then had a number of reasons related to ideology, organisation, and strategy. The increased importance given to violence and militarism did not help the cause. Some groups and individuals left the organisation and adopted the path of electoral democracy and peaceful agitation. Differences are plenty within the movement. Some of Bhupathi's communications with his comrades have shown such fissures and the failures caused by them.

The government must address underlying causes even as it brings far-left cadres into the mainstream

It would be wrong on the part of the government to rely only on a heavy-handed policy to deal with the Maoists. Maoists gained popularity and set up bases in the most backward regions of the country because they tried to address the basic demands of the people. Denial of land and economic rights, caste oppression, social injustice, bureaucratic apathy and corruption had made many areas, especially the tribal-dominated central districts, fertile ground for the spread of the Maoist ideology. Maoists responded to the needs and aspirations of the people and so they gained influence among them. As long as the reasons that gave rise to Maoism exist, the ideology and organisation can't be said to be vanquished. Democratic outreach, good governance and equitable development policies are the best means to fight Maoism. No social and economic battle has been won by force.

SC order on road safety momentous

The Bombay High Court's ruling that the right to roads in reasonably good conditions is a fundamental right and part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution underlines the responsibility of the authorities to provide safe and well-maintained roads. The court said that the authorities had failed to discharge their Constitutional obligations despite repeated directions and assurances. It issued the ruling in a case registered *suo moto* in 2013, and ordered that compensation ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 2.5 lakh be paid for injuries and Rs 6 lakh for deaths caused by potholes or open manholes. It also mandated recovery of the compensation from the officials concerned. The case arose from the poor condition of roads in Mumbai but the observations should be applicable to roads across the country. The court wanted the order to be a wake-up call for all agencies to discharge their duties.

The responsibility for construction and maintenance of roads runs across a long chain, from the top political and ministerial authorities through the contractors to the officials down the ranks. The responsibility and accountability at every level is different but clear. But it is always evaded with a blame game or reference to external factors such as the weather. The Supreme Court has also held in the past that access to safe and well-maintained roads is a fundamental right and it is the responsibility of the state to develop and maintain them. The court recently issued directions for the implementation of road safety measures across the country. It had a few weeks ago directed the Central government to frame pan-India guidelines for pedestrian safety. It has also told all state governments, union territories and the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to be strict in implementing provisions relating to the wearing of helmets by two-wheeler riders and pillion riders. It has mandated the enforcement of other road safety regulations as well.

It has ruled that the right to good roads is a fundamental right under Article 21

Road safety involves various factors, such as design, construction and maintenance of roads, enforcement of traffic rules and regulations, use of safety gear, spread of user awareness, and the design and maintenance of vehicles. India's roads are more dangerous than roads in other parts of the world, as evidenced by the higher number of road accidents and the resultant deaths. About 100 pedestrians die on the roads in India every day. Most roads are designed for vehicles, not pedestrians. All these aspects need to be considered when the problem of road safety is addressed. The right to safe roads should not be lost to potholes.

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The politicisation of the armed forces

Though the forces have systems in place to withstand the onslaught of politics, they are being challenged like never before

A V S NAMBOODIRI

Large segments of national life and institutions of state have increasingly been politicised in the recent past. Politicisation in itself is not wrong. Politics, in the larger sense, involves the relationship of individuals, groups, associations and institutions to the nation, defined by common goals and constitutional ideals and guardrails.

Ideally, politics makes democracy more inclusive and effective, and democracy enriches and expands politics. Democracy has gained by the progressive politicisation of large sections of society since Independence.

But politicisation of a wrong kind, of a party-political or ideological nature, sometimes revolving around a political personality, is now impairing some of the strongest institutions. It could weaken those institutions and the nation. Politicisation becomes wrong when the government takes the place of nation in defining relationships.

One important institution that is facing the pressure of politicisation is the armed forces.

The armed forces have a strong tradition and systems in place to withstand the onslaught of politics but these are being challenged like never before.

Though the pressures have always been there, the present aggravated trend started with Gen Bipin Rawat, who was the Army Chief (2016-19) and later the country's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). He became the Army Chief after superseding two senior generals. He was considered to be overly responsive to the government's sensitivities and demands.

Governments have always tried to take advantage of the armed forces' actions, as it happened after the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war and after Operation Bluestar. But attempts became more blatant and political after the 2016 Uri surgical strikes, the 2019 Balakot airstrike and this year's Operation Sindoor.

The distinction between government and the forces was being sought to be extinguished with the government taking the credit for these and the forces playing along.

The new pressures have an ideological dimension also. According to reports, changes are being brought about in the Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs). Religious symbols such as '*aartis*', 'Om' and '*Bharat Mata Ki Jai*' salutations are being introduced at parades and other functions. Serving officers of high ranks come out in public in support of the government when there is no need for that. Some of these statements have political overtones, and two of them, made recently, have stood out for their inappropriateness.

Earlier this month, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi issued a stark warning to Pakistan and declared that India would not exercise restraint if Islamabad continued to support terrorism. "India is fully prepared this time... We will go a step further and Pakistan will have to consider whether it wants to remain on the world map," he said.

Governments issue warnings to other

governments but it is inappropriate for the Army Chief of a democratic country to issue such rhetorical warnings to other countries.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh went further and made unverifiable claims about the performance of the force doing Operation Sindoor. The fresh disclosures he made this month about the losses inflicted on Pakistan during May hostilities do not add anything to the information about the war or to the credibility of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

He claimed that the IAF took down 11–12 Pakistani aircraft, including F-16s and JF-17s. He also said a lot of other Pakistani assets were destroyed. In August, he had claimed that the IAF had destroyed six Pakistani aircraft. He also dismissed Pakistan's claim of India's losses as "fanciful stories". Other senior officers have since then made similar claims and statements.

The serial claims by the IAF chief raise questions because they are made months after the event. The officers who briefed the nation during the days of the conflict, other senior officers, government representatives or politicians have not made these disclosures.

The question that naturally arises is why these claims of heavy losses suffered by Pakistan were not made when they happened. There is a discrepancy between the claims made in August and this month. While the country would want to believe the IAF chief on his claims, he has the responsibility to back them up.

The poser—why the country's military authorities cannot be believed on their word—is the wrong question in this context. The authorities have themselves given varying accounts. While Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan has acknowledged "losses", the Air Chief dismissed the claims of losses as fanciful stories. It may be noted that government leaders and politicians who declare that Pakistan has been taught a harsh lesson have been silent on the claims made by the IAF chief.

The Air Chief also said that "a key reason for success was the presence of political will" and "very clear directions given to us". These statements are troubling because they raise the doubt whether the IAF Chief was himself pandering to politics with his statement.

The armed forces are professional and non-political and are not expected to make statements that serve politics of any kind. When the IAF chief says a key reason for success was political will, he speaks the language of the Indian cricket team captain who attributed the team's Asia Cup victory to Prime Minister Narendra Modi batting on the front foot.

Leaders of defence forces should not be seen as trying to appease the government and political leadership. They should not make claims and statements that adversely affect their personal credibility and the credibility of the forces. It is the victory of the armed forces and the nation's, not the government's. To attribute it to the government or a leader is being political. Red lines are sometimes crossed. A serving lieutenant general tweeted 'Happy Birthday PM Modi' last year.

This kind of politicisation is the result of the forces or their leadership mistaking their relationship to the nation as a relationship to the government. Some even try to make the relationship personal and use it for personal advancement.

While the forces will certainly be under civilian control, which means control of the government, it does not mean that they should have allegiance to the government's politics and ideology. The Supreme Commander of the armed forces is the President, who is the constitutional head, and not the Prime Minister who heads the executive.

The forces and their leaders should keep this distinction in mind and follow it in practice, so that they remain the professional and non-political forces that they are expected to be.

(The writer is a former associate editor and editorial advisor of Deccan Herald*)*

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Songs and serendipity

A collage brought back memories of my fan moment

JAYA KALYANARAMAN

Staring at a collage that I had made to freeze a very special, once-in-a-lifetime experience took me back to the day I had met Joan Baez. This collage has pictures and a caricature of JB, a tiny guitar, imprints of a dandelion, and her song list of that memorable event bordering the collage in different fonts.

Fifty-five years ago I heard of JB for the first ever time and fell in love with the lyrics of her songs. *Don't sing love songs, you'll wake my mother/ She's sleeping here, right by my side / And in her right hand a silver dagger/ She says, I can't be your bride,* sang my sister, imitating a guy, who in turn, was imitating JB. All JB songs that I began singing in the late sixties were imitations of imitations.

Then Woodstock happened in 1969, and the documentary of this musical event came to our Galaxy theatre in Bangalore (now Bengaluru) in 1971. Many local bands performed before the screening. Central College's very own 'Bob Dylan' with long hair, dark sun glasses, with a harmonica secure in a clasp around his neck, and a guitar in hand, sang *Blowing In The Wind*. That day, for the first time, I saw and heard Joan Baez. Her looks, her voice, and her guitar plucking had me swooning.

My working years in Delhi in the 1970s saw me at Radio Shack in Connaught Place, where I indulged in Joan Baez LPs. My room at the YWCA would reverberate with her songs.

Years later. It had been a real long haul with a baby in arms and a five-year-old, from Ghaziabad to Palam to Paris on Christmas Eve 1980. The husband was already in France many months ahead of us; he had planned for us to attend midnight mass at Notre Dame, just a five-minute walk from our hotel. I hadn't slept in 48 hours, and I chose to skip church only to learn from an English newspaper a couple of days later that Joan Baez had sung at Notre Dame that night. Lost an opportunity to see her live!

Then, forty years after I first heard of her, I was at the Stern Grove festival in San Francisco, and, sitting at a vantage point, through my binoculars I could touch her. Her playlist of songs was like they had been specially chosen for me. I sang along. As the show ended, armed with her autobiography, *A Voice To Sing With*, I requested for an audience with Joan Baez. Granted! Book signed! Photograph taken! A dream came true.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Break the cycle: Develop other cities to help Bengaluru breathe

The alarming rate of deterioration in Bengaluru's infrastructure has been a topic of debate for far too long. The city's potholes and traffic jams are not new, but the lack of effective solutions is staggering. Bengaluru's infrastructure is woefully inadequate to support its burgeoning population. All three major political parties --Congress, BJP and JDS, which were in power at various times -- did little to improve Bengaluru's infrastructure. The real issue lies with the incompetent and corrupt officials and contractors who are awarded the contracts to build and maintain roads and footpaths. The fact that potholes resurface after just a drizzle is a testament to the vicious cycle of corruption and inefficiency. To break this cycle and decongest Bengaluru, the government must develop other cities like Mysuru, Tumakuru, Belagavi, and Hubbali-Dharwad. Otherwise, Bengaluru will continue to suffer from its substandard infrastructure.
Vijay Kumar, Bengaluru

A tough test

Apropos 'Legends face litmus test for future' (Oct 19), India's batting mainstays Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, back at the crease after a long lay-off as both have exited test and T20 cricket had plenty to prove and many more records to break in the first one-dayer between India and Australia, being played at Perth. However, they were far from impressive. Rohit Sharma struggled, facing 16 balls for a modest 8 runs, while Kohli lasted a mere 8 balls, falling prey to a well-laid trap and returning to the pavilion with a golden duck. While their records speak for themselves, it is undeniable that both players are a shadow of their former selves. With the three-match series against Australia potentially being their last, the spotlight is on them to prove their worth once again.
C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Look beyond US

India should not pander to Donald Trump's persona and indulge his whims. His *modus operandi* is to float false narratives through the media, declare falsehoods, and put pressure on his target. Trump's claim that Modi promised to stop buying Russian oil and that they discussed it recently is baseless. The Indian government has rightly denied this, stating that there were no recent calls between Trump and Modi and that India will source its oil needs from the most economical sources.
S Kamat, Mysuru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

During the Ram Janmabhoomi movement in Ayodhya, Congress said Ram is a myth, while the SP fired bullets at Ram devotees...Today, Uttar Pradesh does not have to face an identity crisis. We are now lighting lamps where bullets were once fired.

Yogi Adityanath, UP CM

Give people a common enemy, and you will give them a common identity. Deprive them of an enemy and you will deprive them of the crutch by which they know who they are.

James Alison

TO BE PRECISE

VHP demands Delhi be renamed 'Indraprastha'

IN PERSPECTIVE

Congestion fee? Fix bus fleet first

Such a tax in Bengaluru will work only if it is accompanied by efficient public transport

ACHUTHAN T D AND PRIYANKA THIRUMURTHY

The Karnataka government's recent announcement to introduce a congestion charge on Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR), as part of its 90-day action plan to ease traffic and improve the city's infrastructure, has sparked a heated debate. Some have welcomed the plan as a necessary step, while many others have criticised it as a 'penalty'. To arrive at an informed decision on this matter, there is no substitute for data that clearly captures public perception of the congestion tax and the cost that Bengaluru's residents pay daily due to traffic jams.

Congestion costs Bengaluru an estimated Rs 20,000 crore annually, amounting to 5% of the city's GDP. This means that every commuter in Bengaluru, regardless of what they do and how much they earn, is paying the invisible cost of around Rs 55 per trip in lost time and opportunity.

A more nuanced study of public opinion done by Asar Social Impact Advisors in December 2023, 'Exploring Public Sentiment on the Proposed Congestion Tax in Bengaluru', offers insights into how Bengalureans view congestion pricing. Far from outright rejection, there is cautious optimism.

Almost 74% believe a congestion charge could reduce traffic, especially younger and female respondents. Scepticism largely comes from higher-income and older groups. About 67% would support the charge if it helps them save between half an hour to two hours in their daily commute; 43% prefer peak-hour levies on congested routes like ORR rather than a citywide or round-the-clock charge; 75% say they are likely to reduce personal vehicle use in response to a congestion tax. Improved frequency of services (44.5%), better walking/cycling infrastructure (45%), and shorter travel times (42%) are the top motivations for switching to public transport. About 78% view public input as very important for implementing a congestion fee, with broad consensus across demographics.

The message is clear: Bengalureans are willing to try congestion pricing, but only if it is implemented with the goal of reducing commute time, complemented with improvements in public transport, and designed with public input.

Global evidence supports this optimism. London's congestion charge, introduced in 2003, led to a 30% reduction in peak-hour traffic, and the net revenue of around £136 million generated annually is exclusively used to improve public transport. It has also led to a 33% increase in bus usage.

Singapore pioneered technology-driven dynamic congestion pricing in the 1970s, combining it with world-class buses, metros, and walking networks. Stockholm, after an initially unpopular trial in 2006, saw traffic drop by 22% and public approval rise to 53% once results became visible.

Bengaluru has just 7,007 buses for 1.4 crore people, which translates to 50 buses per lakh population, compared to London's 89 and Singapore's and Stockholm's 98. To reach Singapore and Stockholm's ratio, Bengaluru would need to nearly double its bus fleet.

BMTC buses connecting other parts of the city to the ORR carry nearly two lakh passengers daily, similar to the number of private vehicles that ply on the ORR every day. Yet buses are often stuck in the same jams with no priority lanes. Bengaluru is the third-most traffic-congested city in the world despite having fewer cars per capita than London. The reason is not excessive car ownership, but inadequate public transport, forcing dependence on private vehicles.

For a congestion charge on ORR to work, Bengaluru must move quickly on four fronts:

1) Expand the bus fleet and frequency: The ORR needs a significant increase in BMTC services, with priority lanes where possible. Improved frequency and shorter travel times are the top motivations for switching to public transport.

2) Fix first- and last-mile connectivity: Affordable and regular feeder shuttles for first and last-mile connectivity, safer footpaths, walking and cycling lanes, and reliable metro-bus linkages can make buses a default choice.

3) Corporate responsibility: Bengaluru firms could subsidise BMTC passes, incentivise staggered work timings, or offer bonuses for employees who switch to public transport.

4) Transparent use of revenues: With 78% of residents demanding accountability, revenues should be ring-fenced for visible improvements—more buses, better bus stops, enhanced service quality, and improved accessibility.

Congestion pricing is not about punishing car users. It is about valuing road space fairly. A single bus carrying 60 passengers should not be trapped behind 60 cars each carrying one, especially since cars on ORR emit 25 times more CO_2 per kilometre than buses.

The ORR is Bengaluru's economic backbone. If a congestion charge here succeeds, it can be scaled to other corridors. If it fails, the political fallout could set back traffic reform for years. Success will depend not on how much is charged, but what commuters get in return.

(Achuthan is senior researcher - Sustainable Mobility, Asar Social Impact Advisors; Priyanka is head of communications - Sustainable Mobility, Asar Social Impact Advisors)

From access to enablement: Elevating the role of incubators

SRINIVAS UPPALURI

A recent conversation with a representative from a national incubator network offered a quiet but important insight. During a discussion about a potential session about go-to-market strategy and marketing for artificial intelligence startups, a direct question was raised: how does the network define success for the startups it supports?

The response was clear and honest: "We create forums, bootcamps, mentoring. The startups decide what to leverage. We don't specifically focus on maturity outcomes."

This perspective is not uncommon. Across many programmes, the dominant narrative revolves around access—to mentors, customers, investors, and government platforms. For example, a recent incubation programme invitation promised: "What founders will get: Access to pilots, customers, 1:1 mentoring, connects with large number of funds and ecosystem partners."

Such offerings are undeniably valuable. However, by design, they are enablers, not outcomes. The underlying assumption is that if access is provided, startups will know how to convert opportunities into value. In reality, many struggle—not because of lack of ability, but because they are still at early stages of development and learning to make the most of available opportunities.

Startups today navigate increasingly complex terrains marked by shifting technologies, evolving customer expectations, and heightened investor scrutiny. In this context, maturity is not merely a function of time or traction; it depends on strategic clarity and organisational depth.

This is precisely where incubators and accelerators can make a significant difference. Their role extends beyond merely opening doors; they have the opportunity to prepare startups to walk through those doors with confidence and clarity.

Perspectives on startup maturity

To support this journey, maturity must be viewed as a multi-dimensional construct. An overview of the maturity focus is provided in the adjacent table. A maturity matrix (see table) can serve as a tool for startups to self-assess and identify gaps, and shift focus from short-term traction to sustained progress. The assessment process is rigorous and should be revisited at various stages of evolution.

Dimension	Focus of Maturity
Markets & Customers	Strategic fit, wallet share logic, stakeholder alignment
Products & Services	Outcome ownership, leverage readiness, ecosystem delivery
Operational Processes	Scalable systems, tech enablement, institutional ways of working
People & Leadership	Current execution + future readiness, leadership for scaling
Technology – Product	Pioneering relevance, deployability, industry-setting approaches
Technology – Management	IT/digital aligned with business strategy and decision cycles
Business Model	Revenue architecture, risk logic, breakeven and future asset logic
Strategic Balance – 4E	Alignment across Earn, Enable, Engage, Explore lenses

Most incubation programmes already offer a vibrant menu of support: mentorship hours, demo days, bootcamps on fundraising, networking with venture capitalists, and corporates. While each adds value, their true impact emerges when they are woven into a structured capability-building journey. Founders need more than visibility or exposure -- they need structured reflection, clarity on what to build next, and an environment that challenges them to think beyond the immediate and the urgent.

Balancing autonomy and structure

Within the startup ecosystem, it is widely believed that founders know best and should choose the interventions they need. This autonomy is crucial. But structure and reflection are not constraints on autonomy—they are tools to enhance it.

It is common to see startups opt for marketing bootcamps when their real challenge lies in product readiness, or to prioritise investor meetings before developing a clear stakeholder map. By adopting a maturity-first approach, founders can make choices based on insight rather than instinct.

The role of the incubator, therefore, is not to prescribe a rigid path. Instead, it is to serve as a mirror—offering frameworks, feedback, and focused interventions that help each founder shape their own evolution. Incubators have already played a pivotal role in catalysing India's startup ecosystem. The next stage of impact, however, lies not in expansion, but in deepening engagement and support.

The shift involves moving:

- From events to structured journeys
- From access to capability
- From celebrating pitches to building resilient business models
- From transactional support to long-term partnership

A maturity lens enables programmes to adapt, personalise, and elevate their impact—while preserving the agility that allows startups to thrive.

When incubators transition from simply providing access to fostering enablement, the value they create compounds—benefiting founders, sectors, and the broader ecosystem.

Ultimately, what matters is not merely who founders connect with, but how prepared they are when those connections happen. True startup readiness encompasses maturity across multiple dimensions, including:

- A well-defined market and customer focus, aligned with strategic fit and timing
- Product and service readiness that enables full customer value realisation
- Operational processes that are institutionalised, scalable, and strategic
- Leadership and talent systems balancing current execution with future readiness
- Technological capabilities strategically leveraged in both product and operations
- Business models grounded in sound financial logic, risk anticipation, and scalability planning
- The ability to think and act across time horizons—earning today, enabling future growth, and exploring disruptions

Incubators have a pivotal opportunity to support startups across these areas—not merely providing access, but by actively enabling maturity and long-term success.

(The writer is an author and leadership coach)

Since its brief war in June with Israel, Iran has throttled Internet traffic and jammed GPS, making routine tasks online a struggle, and prompting Iranians' fears of greater surveillance

Shutting down the web won't shut out spies

SANAM MAHOOZI AND ERIKA SOLOMON

A woman checks her phone on a hill in Tehran, Iran. Many Iranians once used VPNs – virtual private networks – to circumvent restrictions. But those are increasingly difficult to reach in the country. THE NEW YORK TIMES

Throughout its 12 days of war with Israel in June, Iran enforced a near total Internet blackout on its people, saying that it was a necessary security measure to stop Israeli infiltration.

Though the authorities have since technically lifted the blackout, Internet activists, tech entrepreneurs and rights monitors say that a wartime choke-hold on the web remains, leaving many Iranians still in the dark.

Digital rights experts say that Internet speeds have been slowed, online traffic has been curtailed and geolocation positioning services, or GPS, is jammed. The use of satellite internet tools like Starlink, which could allow users to bypass such blocks, has been criminalised.

The partial shutdown has left Iranians struggling to communicate with one another and the outside world. Compounding Iran's international isolation, the United Nations recently reimposed sanctions on its nuclear programme.

The Internet restrictions have had profound implications for ordinary Iranians. Since the war, simple tasks like finding directions, ordering a taxi or paying for groceries online have become an hourslong saga.

Abbas, a 71-year-old businessman, eventually gave up on his phone's online directions as he tried to find a friend's house in the city of Karaj.

"I kept driving in circles," said Abbas, who asked to withhold his last name out of fear of reprisal for speaking to foreign media, adding that he was not alone in his frustration. "Everybody is lost."

Officials from Iran's Ministry of Information and Communications Technology did not respond to requests for comment on Internet restrictions. But a June article by the news agency *Tasnim*, which is linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard, said that "Internet restrictions are necessary in wartime for defence against the enemy."

Sattar Hashemi, the information minister, has publicly acknowledged GPS jamming, saying it was intended to stop Israel from flying drones in Iran. Authorities have also told State media that Internet controls are necessary to prevent the spread of Israeli disinformation and cyberattacks.

Curbing the Internet will have limited impact on Israeli intelligence, said Amir Rashidi, director of digital rights and security at the Miaan Group, a US-based rights organisation focussed on the Middle East. He said Iran was already deeply infiltrated by Israeli operatives.

Israel demonstrated the extent of its intelligence on Iran during the brief June war, when the military killed a string of top generals and nuclear scientists in their homes, knocked out air-defence systems and forced the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, into hiding.

The Islamic Republic has partly censored the Internet since 2005, with social media sites such as Facebook or Instagram blocked across the country. It has also temporarily shut down Internet access in parts of the country before, in response to large-scale anti-government protests.

After Israel attacked Iran's nuclear and military sites in June, Iranian authorities severed public access to websites and online messaging platforms, except for state-run or government-approved networks. They also blocked Internet-based calls, along with international phone calls and text messages, making it almost impossible for Iranians to reach loved ones abroad.

Digital rights activists say the recent shutdown has been far reaching and seemingly open-ended, and signals a growing wariness among Iranian officials since the war about allowing open Internet access.

After the fighting ended in June, it emerged that Israel had used mobile phones and online tools to track the bodyguards of Iran's leaders and nuclear scientists. Internet activists inside Iran and abroad argue that authorities are exploiting those security concerns to curb the relative social and political freedoms that the web offers, not least as an outlet for criticising the government.

The shutdown also gave Iran a long sought-after opportunity to shift its Internet model closer to that found in China, by imposing the use of domestic versions of international apps for everything from messaging to shopping, analysts say.

WhatsApp, an international messaging app, has been temporarily banned in Iran before, but Iranians have often used virtual private networks, or VPNs, to circumvent those restrictions.

During the fighting in June, when Iran heavily restricted internet access, international apps such as WhatsApp were blocked and many VPNs became inaccessible, according to Rashidi of Miaan. That forced Iranians to switch to using local platforms like Bale, a messaging app, which many had long avoided because of surveillance concerns.

"Iran's entire goal for decades now was to isolate people as much as possible onto the domestic network," said Fereidoon Bashar, the director of a Toronto-based tech firm, ASL19, which makes VPN software for the Iranian market.

Since the war, VPN use has largely been restored, but most are domestically made platforms, which experts say could be subject to surveillance and monitoring by the authorities. The use of VPNs had been so widespread that Iranians were some of the most prolific users of Instagram, despite its official ban. And senior officials — including Ayatollah Khamenei — frequently release statements on platforms like X, which is also banned.

The extent of the recent crackdown, however, has broken many Iranians' will to get around the restrictions.

Internet censors have cut off many tools that were once used to access the Internet, said Saeed Souzangar, a tech entrepreneur based in Tehran. "I am a tech expert and, right now, I am connected with immense difficulty."

The censorship has hurt Iranian businesses at a time of severe economic crisis.

Amirhossein, a 38-year-old in the IT department of a food distributor, said some employees had resorted to manually checking inventories rather than relying on online systems. He asked not to be identified by his full name out of concerns about talking to foreign media.

In August, 100 companies signed a letter demanding that the government lift Internet restrictions.

In response, Iran's authorities passed a law imposing a "tiered Internet" system, in which businesses, academics and journalists can receive access to faster Internet than general users. Wary of previously strong resistance to the project, however, the government has put the system in place slowly.

Cybersecurity experts like Rashidi of Miaan warned that such measures were gradually eroding most Iranians' access to unfettered Internet. With each shutdown, the restrictions have worsened, he said, adding, "This is the new norm."

The New York Times

Feeding the world, one microbe at a time

SHWETA RANA AND SHIVESH SHARMA

It is evident that the current agrifood system is unsustainable. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2025 report, an estimated 673 million people—or 8.2% of the global population—experienced hunger in 2024. The World Health Organisation has also noted that global food insecurity has worsened in recent years.

In 2015, world leaders pledged to end hunger by 2030 through Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2): Zero hunger. This goal was not just about making sure that people have food but was also about ensuring that each human on every corner of the globe has access to healthy, safe, and nutritious food. Yet a decade later, this ambition appears increasingly out of reach.

Climate change, wars, poverty, and rising food prices have made progress difficult. To achieve SDG 2, we need innovative solutions—and one of them may come from an unexpected source: microbes.

Humans have long harnessed micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and algae to make foods like yogurt, bread, and cheese through fermentation. Scientists are now exploring how these microbes themselves can be turned into food—heralding what can be termed a 'microbial food revolution.' The new path ahead to conquer world food hunger seems achievable with this revolution. Some examples of this include growing protein from fungi, which is used in meat alternatives like Quorn. Protein powders, or even milk, can be made by bacteria without cows. Air and carbon dioxide can be converted into food using microbes and clean energy.

A major advantage of microbial food is its high nutritional value. Even today, millions remain malnourished despite having enough to eat. This affects children the most. Microbial food can help counter this, as it is full of important vitamins and minerals, such as iron, vitamin B12, omega-3 fatty acids, and amino acids.

This type of food is easy to grow. Growing techniques do not need big farms, fertile soil, conducive weather, and lots of water. It can be grown in small tanks, even in places where normal farming isn't possible. It can also be grown inside and outside in arid areas and is not affected by climate or natural disasters.

Growing microbial food is sustainable and good for the environment. Farming uses a lot of land, water, and energy. It also produces greenhouse gases, which lead to global warming. Microbial food production is much more efficient, as it uses less land, water, and energy, and also helps to remove carbon, a constituent of many greenhouse gases, from the air. Microbial food growth can help local communities grow monetarily. Small machines can be set up in villages or towns where locals can grow microbial food using leftover crops or waste.

A big challenge that governments may face in this journey is people switching to microbial food. They can face roadblocks, as most people are used to traditional food systems of consuming direct products from plants and animals for centuries. People may not be easily convinced about microbial food and may consider it a lie or a gimmick to make money!

The remedy to this challenge is to educate the masses, especially the younger generation, on the importance of using microbial foods in diets, and governments must build trust in new food systems by spreading education about sustainable food growth and microbial food as the best option for our future. The appearance, taste, and flavour of the microbial food will be a crucial aspect of marketing.

Many countries have started the production and selling of microbial food, with India being one of them. As per the reports from the microbial food culture market, India, with a 7% compound annual growth rate, will globally lead the production and usage of microbial food in the coming decade, followed by Germany at 5.8% and the US at 4.3%.

These tiny micro-organisms have a tremendous potential for growing enough and providing a variety of nutritious foods to achieve the second SDG, which otherwise seems unachievable by 2030, given the current scenario.

(Shweta is faculty in Environmental Studies at FLAME University; Shivesh teaches in the Department of Biotechnology, Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: OCTOBER 1975

Sheikh joins NC

Srinagar, October 19
Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah today formally joined the National Conference which was revived by his former Plebiscite Front followers three months ago after the Kashmir accord. The Sheikh took the step dramatically at a public meeting in which he declared that it was the democratic privilege of the people of the State to reject Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's decision that the Congress should stay in the State. The Sheikh said he had so far hoped that better counsel would prevail and the Congress would merge.

25 YEARS AGO: OCTOBER 2000

Sonia files papers for party post

New Delhi, Oct. 19
Fireworks, sloganeering and festivity marked the filing of nominations for the post of the Congress president at the AICC office here today. Most of the senior Congress leaders, including its CMs, lined up to file 74 sets of nominations for Ms Sonia Gandhi. The rebel Congress Working Committee member, Mr Jitendra Prasada, said he would declare tomorrow if he would contest or not. He, however, assured his supporters that he would take "the fight to its logical conclusion".

OASIS | SANDHYA VASUDEV

Going beyond the veil of identity

The question as to who I am may strike each one at a certain point of life. Am I the doctor, engineer, scientist, teacher, businessman, AI professional, housewife, or politician? In reality I am not any of them but only recognised as such. Why does one forget that life is but the journey of the soul? The body is important to the extent it nourishes the soul within, helping it in its spiritual progress, but remains only the vehicle, which one should maintain in good running condition.

The spirit/soul may vacate the rented accommodation any day, therefore should experience a calm stay and a peaceful journey that enables it to realise its true substance. Or else the option for another accommodation crops up earlier than expected. One may recall Swami Vivekananda asking the almighty for another body to further his mission as the current one was failing in health. As Krishna says in the Gita, *Dehino yasmin yatha dehe kaumaram yauvanam jara tathaa dehaantara prapthir*... Just as the same soul continues in the body that changes during childhood, youth and old age, when the body perishes the soul enters a fresh body, continuing its journey.

The riddle related to the words "my body" was highlighted by Udupi Palimar mutt senior pontiff Sree Vidyadeesha swamiji in a recent discourse. "The body is not who I am and this basic truth is actually known by each one.

Then why else would I say, this is "my" body? Who am I indicating through "my"? Even then I behave as if I am the body and take glory in all the achievements done by this body, that I, the consciousness/spirit, possess," he said.

This is because of the conditioning the spirit/soul undergoes when it gets a body and soon begins to identify itself with the body forgetting that the body is only an instrument for its own progress towards realization. One sees mixtures like chaff with grain, mustard with sesame, and so on. It takes time to separate one from the other.

Similarly, one should ponder and understand the difference between the self and the egocentric body, and condition the body instead, to work only for the upliftment of the spirit/soul within. This can be done only through human life.

Centre, Ladakh leaders to resume talks on Oct 22

Move comes 2 days after Centre ordered a judicial inquiry into the Sept 24 clashes

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

FRESH ENGAGEMENT

- Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance to meet MHA subcommittee.
- Ladakh MP Haneefa Jan to attend
- Both Centre and Ladakh leaders keen to avoid fresh deadlock

Nearly a month after violent protests rocked Leh, the dialogue between Ladakh's groups and the Centre is set to resume, signalling a cautious return to engagement after weeks of tension and mistrust.

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)—the two umbrella groups spearheading Ladakh's agitation for statehood and constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule—on Sunday announced that they will meet a subcommittee of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in New Delhi on October 22.

Ladakh MP Haneefa Jan will attend the meeting, according to LAB co-chairman Chering Dorje Lakruk.

"We have been informed by the MHA about the meeting and are hopeful that this round of talks will yield a positive outcome," Dorje said, adding that the invitation from the Centre comes as a welcome step after a prolonged stalemate.

The announcement comes two days after the Centre ordered a judicial inquiry, headed by a retired Supreme Court judge, into the September 24 clashes that left four people dead and dozens injured.

The violence broke out during a hunger strike called by prominent climate activist Sonam Wangchuk to press for talks on Ladakh's key demands—full statehood, job and land protections, and inclusion under the Sixth Schedule that provides autonomy to tribal regions.

Wangchuk was detained and was later booked under the National Security Act.

The Ladakh agitation has its roots in the 2019 bifurcation of J&K, which made Ladakh a Union Territory without a legislature.

Both LAB and KDA—representing the Buddhist-majority Leh and Muslim-majority Kargil districts, respectively—have jointly pushed for statehood and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule.

Violent escalation

Talks with the Centre collapsed earlier this year after repeated rounds failed to produce tangible results, prompting renewed street mobilisation and, eventually, the violent escalation in September.

The Centre's decision to appoint a judicial commission was seen as an attempt to restore confidence and open space for dialogue.

For now, both the Centre and Ladakh's representatives appear eager to avoid another breakdown.

Banned cough syrup worth Rs 3 crore seized; 3 held in UP

SONBHADRA (UP), PTI: A joint team of police and excise department officials seized banned cough syrup worth Rs 3 crore and arrested three accused in this connection here, an official said on Sunday.

Additional Superintendent of Police Anil Kumar said 1.19 lakh bottles of banned cough syrup worth about Rs 3 crore, being transported from Ghaziabad to Jharkhand in two container trucks, were seized near Churk in Uttar Pradesh's Sonbhadra district on Saturday evening, and three accused were arrested.

He said that after examining the cough syrup, the drug inspector confirmed that it contained the narcotic substance codeine, which falls under the category of prohibited drugs under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

The officer said the three accused—Hemant Pal, a resident of Shivpuri (Madhya Pradesh), Brajmohan Shivhare, a resident of Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh), and Ramgopal Dhakad, a resident of Gwalior—revealed during interrogation that they smuggled the contraband between cartons of chips and snacks to evade authorities.

The accused also disclosed that a person in Jharkhand was going to tell them where to unload the consignment, the police said.

First Vande Bharat sleeper coach formally unveiled

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The first Vande Bharat sleeper coach with Russian technology was unveiled on Saturday at the International Railway Equipment Exhibition (IREE) 2025 here.

The move came after Kinet Railway Solutions — a joint venture between Russia's largest rolling-stock manufacturer Transmashholding and the state-owned Indian company Rail Vikas Nigam Limited — got all necessary design approvals from the Railways.

The partnership was established for the Vande Bharat sleeper train project, which includes the design and manufacture of 1,920 sleeper coaches (120 train sets) and their maintenance for 35 years.

Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu, who inspected the mock-up Vande Bharat Sleeper coach, said: "It is a superb design with the best possible facilities, and I am happy that passengers will be able to use the most modern of sleeper coaches."

The new First AC four-berth compartment is said to offer a spacious, bright, and comfortable environment designed for enhanced privacy.

There is a staircase to ensure easy access to the upper berths, while each seat comes with a built-in USB port, individual reading light, and smart storage solutions.

Vande Bharat Project Chief Designer Evgeny Maslov said, "Even the niche under the staircase serves as a bedside space — a place for a book, a phone, or a watch."

The decks were now clear for the Vande Bharat sleeper prototype to be rolled out next year, said Railway Board Chairman Satish Kumar.

Railways is set to introduce this new sleeper version of the Vande Bharat Express soon. This variant is expected to be used for overnight service and run on most of the Rajdhani Express routes.

Delhi: Pregnant woman stabbed to death by former live-in partner; hubby kills attacker

NEW DELHI, PTI: A pregnant woman was allegedly stabbed to death by her former live-in partner in Delhi's Nabi Karim area before her husband overpowered and killed the attacker, police said on Sunday.

The deceased were identified as Shalini, 22, wife of Aakash and a mother of two, and Aashu alias Shailendra, 34, a "bad character" of Nabi Karim Police Station, they said.

Aakash, 23, who sustained multiple stab injuries while saving his wife, is undergoing treatment at a hospital here, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Nidhin Valsan said. "The incident occurred around 10.15 pm on Saturday when Aakash and Shalini were on their way to meet her mother, Sheila, on Qutub Road. Aashu suddenly arrived there and attacked Aakash with a knife."

Aakash managed to dodge the first blow, but Aashu then turned towards Shalini, who was seated in an e-rickshaw, stabbed her multiple times, police said.

"Aakash rushed to her rescue but was also stabbed. He, however, managed to overpower Aashu, snatched his knife and stabbed him during the scuffle," the DCP said.

Shalini's brother Rohit and some local residents took all three to a hospital, where doctors declared Shalini and Aashu dead, police said.

"During inquiry, it was found that Shalini was pregnant at the time of her death," police said.

Police sources said the incident took place in full public view on a busy stretch near Qutub Road, triggering panic in the area.

According to Shalini's mother, the couple's marriage had been strained a few years ago, during which she entered into a live-in relationship with Aashu. Later, she reconciled with Aakash and returned to live with him and their two children, said the DCP.

This enraged Ashu, who also claimed to be the father of Shalini's unborn child, police said.

MISCELLANY

◆COMICS◆

Blondie

HOW DO YOU PLAY THAT SUDOKU GAME ANYWAY?
OH, IT'S EASY! YOU JUST PUT THE NUMBERS 1-9 IN THEIR DESIGNATED PLACES ON THE GRID!
IT'S KIND OF LIKE THE OLD ADAGE: A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING AND EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE
IS THIS A VEILED HINT TO GET ME TO CLEAN OUT THE GARAGE?
BINGO!

Hagar The Horrible

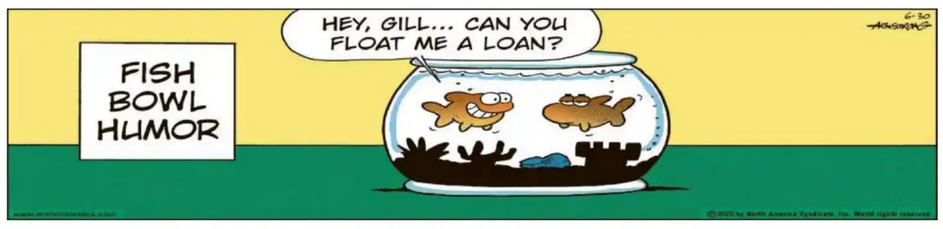
Beetle Bailey

YOUR MOTHER CALLED.
DID SHE LEAVE A MESSAGE?
"DO WHAT SARGE TELLS YOU IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU."
NOW YOU'RE PUTTING WORDS IN HER MOUTH.

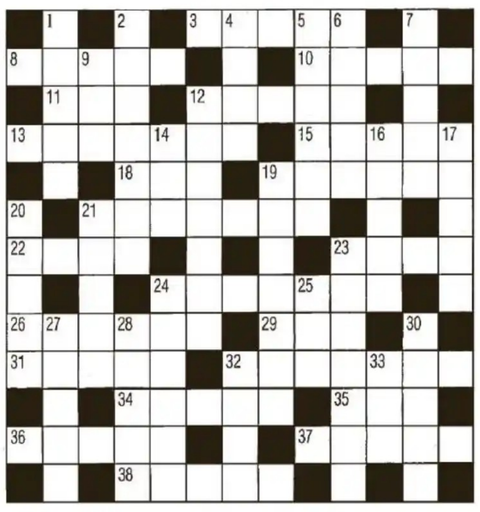
Peanuts

THERE'S A STRANGE FEELING OF LONELINESS AFTER A BALL GAME IS OVER...
THE FIELD IS EMPTY... THE AIR IS SILENT... THE SHADOWS BEGIN TO LENGTHEN...
SOON NOTHING IS LEFT BUT MEMORIES
STUPID KID... I DIDN'T THINK HE WAS EVER GOING TO LEAVE!

Marvin



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12270



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 Deign to give a drunken sot an operation (5)
8 To settle a debt, you need your wage increased (3,2)
10 Part of your anatomy that's orange (5)
11 Man of tomorrow (3)
12 Not without a time limit! (5)
13 Perform for that misguided brute Thomas! (7)
15 A more reasonable, faultless service to the West Indies (5)
18 It's usually kept in Delaware (3)
19 Home for a hundred at least, maybe (6)
21 Within 24 hours, Tex tangled with Andy! (4,3)
22 Would be sound timber (4)
23 It's good to be accurate (4)
24 Where the Dons may be out to win! (7)
26 Agitated, one possibly has to know! (6)
29 Sustain oneself in theatrical style (3)
31 Teams in agreement with Mr Lynam? (5)
32 A tidy worker (7)
34 Where the Welsh don't allow rail transport? (5)
35 Bird food? (3)
36 Left during the game, perhaps, the light being so weak (5)
37 She isn't crazy all day! (5)
38 Her label's torn (5)

DOWN
1 The club boat's changed course! (5)
2 Made a noise and was detected (7)
4 Seating arrangement at the bank? (4)
5 Unique method of organising traffic? (3,3)
6 Where the standard is capital (5)
7 Speak frankly, possibly with spirit (5)
9 One gets half an hour at the end of the day (3)
12 Milton Keynes for instance, is an unfamiliar place (3,4)
14 Levy that makes part-time soldiers cross (3)
16 Being a mug, is stony (5)
17 Wild party the red-headed woman left (5)
19 Food packing place with a name to shout about (7)
20 Foreign, but to the southwest is central Ruislip (5)
21 The wanderer Damon turns up (5)
23 As used for writing home at Eton, perhaps (7)
24 The plant uncle has to look out for (6)
25 Old man of no fixed address (3)
27 Damon's are said to be old (5)
28 Food to bake badly, being a bonehead? (5)
30 Like a brand new pair of heels (5)
32 Spoken with love to the right boy (4)
33 Free fridge part (3)

ACROSS
3 Shocks (5)
8 Deadly (5)
10 Gold bar (5)
11 And not (3)
12 First-rate (5)
13 Servant (7)
15 Rays (5)
18 Pistachio (3)
19 Coarse fabric (6)
21 Monotonous (7)
22 Head covering (4)
23 Discourteous (4)
24 Word puzzle (7)
26 Skilful (6)
29 Cover (3)
31 Practical joke (5)
32 Metropolis (7)
34 Sea duck (5)
35 Beaker (3)
36 Uninteresting (5)
37 Hut (5)
38 Toys (5)

DOWN
1 Landed estate (5)
2 Companion (7)
4 Rotate (4)
5 Cloud type (6)
6 Scornful expression (5)
7 Punctuation mark (5)
9 Also (3)
12 Tolerant (7)
14 Wet earth (3)
16 Photo book (5)
17 Glib talk (5)
19 Housebreaker (7)
20 Inexpensive (5)
21 Jewelled headdress (5)
23 Basic (7)
24 System of self defence (6)
25 Rend (3)
27 Practice routine (5)
28 Upright (2,3)
30 Palatable (5)
32 Prisoner's room (4)
33 Container (3)

SOLUTIONS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2650

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1 Harness, 5 Timpani, 9 Gesture, 10 Keynote, 11 Adept, 12 Disrepair, 13 Duty-bound, 15 Foyer, 16 Foray, 18 Dust cover, 21 Eccentric, 24 Final, 25 Slumber, 26 Recluse, 27 Artless, 28 Austere.

DOWN: 1 Haggard, 2 Respect, 3 Equitably, 4 Speed, 5 Take sides, 6 Maybe, 7 Anomaly, 8 In error, 14 Under arms, 15 Face facts, 16 Freesia, 17 Recount, 19 Venture, 20 Relieve, 22 Noble, 23 Circa.

◆SU-DO-KU-6730◆

1	7	5			8			
9								
			4	5			6	7
4		3			2		1	
	8						4	
	1		7			3		6
8	5			3	6			
								2
			2			8	5	9

medium

5	7	1	2	4	9	3	8	6
2	4	3	5	8	6	7	1	9
8	6	9	7	1	3	4	2	5
1	5	4	6	7	2	9	3	8
7	2	8	3	9	4	6	5	1
9	3	6	8	5	1	2	4	7
6	1	7	4	3	5	8	9	2
3	9	2	1	6	8	5	7	4
4	8	5	9	2	7	1	6	3

SOLUTION TO 6729

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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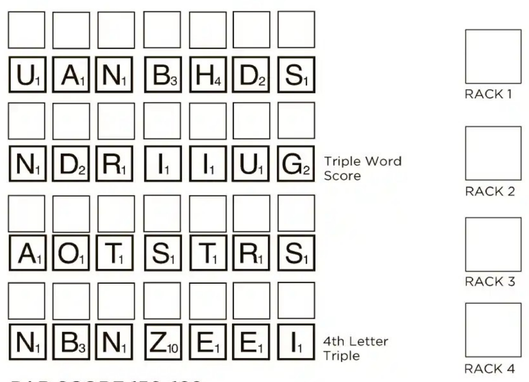

U1 A1 N1 B3 H4 D2 S1
N1 D2 R1 I1 I1 U1 G2
Triple Word Score
A1 O1 T1 S1 T1 R1 S1
N1 B3 N1 Z10 E1 E1 I1
4th Letter Triple
RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4

PAR SCORE 150-160
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

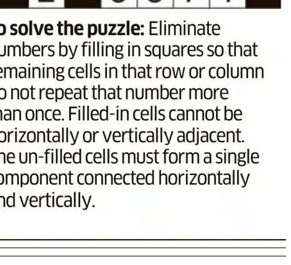
M3 O1 O1 N1 Y4	RACK 1 =	18
T1 U1 B3 U1 L1 A1 R1	RACK 2 =	68
T1 R1 O1 U1 P3 E1 R1	RACK 3 =	77
V4 I1 N1 I1 E1 R1	RACK 4 =	9
E1 Q10 U1 A1 L1 L1 Y4	RACK 5 =	69
PAR SCORE 155-165	JUDD'S TOTAL	241

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DENUU
MRURO
MIBGTA
CIDETE


You've tasted them all. Are there any you like?
What kind of grass are these cows eating? This tastes waxy.
4/11
THE GRUMPY GUY WHO FOUND FAULT WITH EVERY TYPE OF CHEESE WAS A ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"_____-_____"
(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: MODEM BUGGY ITALIC HONCHO
Answer: The patient wasn't flossing or brushing enough, so the dentist was — BAD-MOUTHING HIM

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HITORI-3184

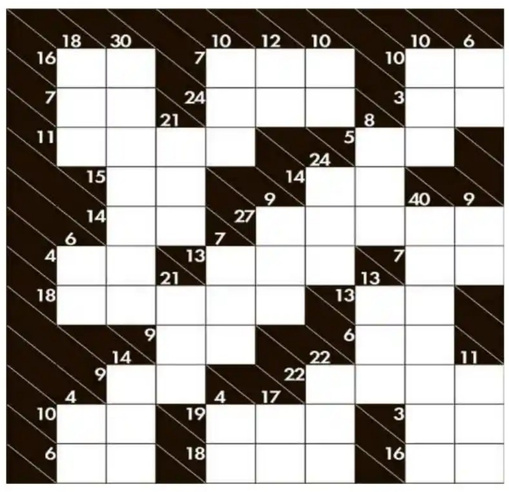
8	5	7	2	8	4	7	6
7	8	7	6	1	5	4	2
7	7	1	7	3	8	5	8
4	5	8	7	6	7	2	3
3	8	6	5	4	2	3	1
2	1	5	7	8	1	7	7
3	3	2	1	2	7	6	8
5	6	8	8	2	3	1	1

SOLUTION TO 3183

■	5	■	4	6	8	■	2
2	4	5	■	1	■	3	8
6	3	■	8	5	2	4	■
■	1	3	■	4	■	8	5
3	6	■	1	8	4	2	■
■	7	8	6	■	1	5	4
7	8	6	■	2	3	■	1
■	2	■	5	3	7	1	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

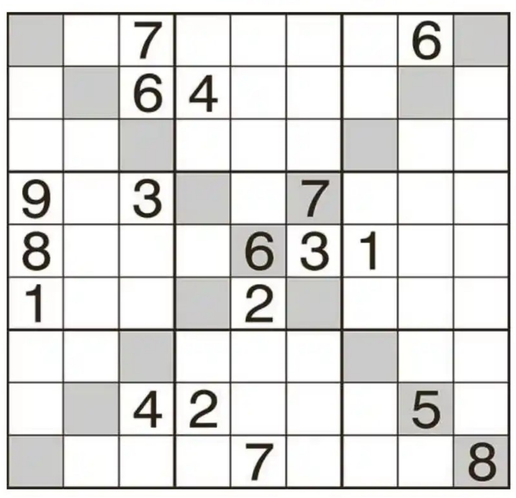
KAKURO- 3184



SOLUTION TO 3183

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3711



SOLUTION TO 3710

7	6	4	8	9	5	3	1	2
9	2	3	7	4	1	5	8	6
5	1	8	6	3	2	7	4	9
1	7	9	5	8	4	2	6	3
3	8	6	2	1	9	4	7	5
4	5	2	3	7	6	1	9	8
8	4	5	1	6	3	9	2	7
2	9	7	4	5	8	6	3	1
6	3	1	9	2	7	8	5	4

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Protesters out in force for anti-Trump rallies across US

Republicans ridicule protests as 'Hate America' rallies

WASHINGTON, AFP

Huge crowds took to the streets in all 50 US states at "No Kings" protests on Saturday, venting anger over President Donald Trump's hardline policies, while Republicans ridiculed them as "Hate America" rallies.

Organisers said seven million people marched in protests spanning New York to Los Angeles, with demonstrations popping up in small cities across the US heartland and even near Trump's home in Florida.

"This is what democracy looks like!" chanted thousands in Washington near the US Capitol, where the federal government was shut down for a third week because of a legislative deadlock.

Colorful signs called on people to "protect democracy," while others demanded the country abolish the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency at the center of Trump's anti-immigrant crackdown.

Demonstrators slammed what they called the Republican billionaire's strong-arm tactics, including attacks on the media, political opponents and undocumented immigrants.

UP IN ARMS

- In downtown Los Angeles, police fire nonlethal rounds and tear gas to disperse crowds
- Seven million people march in protests spanning New York to Los Angeles
- "No Kings" demonstrations decry the US govt's swift drift into authoritarianism under President Donald Trump.

Protesters hold signs and wear costumes of a frog, a symbol of Portland resistance, as tens of thousands of "No Kings" demonstrators fill McCall Park and both the Morrison and Hawthorne Bridges in Portland, Oregon. REUTERS

"I never thought I would live to see the death of my country as a democracy," 69-year-old retiree Colleen Hoffman told AFP as she marched down Broadway in New York.

"We are in a crisis -- the cruelty of this regime, the authoritarianism. I just feel like I cannot sit home and do nothing."

In Los Angeles, protesters floated a giant balloon of Trump in a diaper.

Many flew flags, with at least one referencing pirate anime hit "One Piece", brandishing the skull logo that has recently become a staple of anti-government protests from Peru to Madagascar.

"Fight Ignorance not migrants," read one sign at a protest in Houston, where nearly one-quarter of the population is made up of immigrants, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

While animated, the protests were largely peaceful.

But in downtown Los Angeles, police fired nonlethal rounds and tear gas late Saturday to disperse crowds that included "No Kings" protesters, the Los Angeles Times reported.

It was not possible to independently verify the organisers' attendance figures. In New York, authorities said more than 100,000 gathered at one of the largest protests, while in Washington, crowds were estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000 people.

US attacks Colombia rebel group boat as Trump ends aid

WASHINGTON, AFP: The United States announced on Sunday another strike against what it called a drug-running boat, this time attacking an alleged Colombian leftist rebel vessel in an apparent expansion of a US military operation off the coasts of South America.

Word of the attack from Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth came as President Donald Trump said the United States is halting financial aid to Colombia, accusing its president of condoning the production of drugs. This took embattled relations between two longstanding allies to a new low.

The United States has had warships deployed in the Caribbean off Venezuela since August and attacked at least six boats it said were running drugs toward the United States, killing at least 27 people so far.

Experts question the legality of attacking such boats in international waters without trying to intercept them or arrest the crew members and bring them to trial.

The flotilla has created acute tension with Venezuela amid fears the ultimate goal of the operation might be to oust leftist President Nicolas Maduro, who Washington says leads a drug cartel.

In a strike carried out Friday, Hegseth said US forces attacked a vessel he said was affiliated with Colombia's National Liberation Army, a leftist guerrilla group known as ELN in Spanish.

Govt trying to arrest me: ex-Nepal PM Oli

KATHMANDU, PTI: Nepal's deposed Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli on Sunday said the current government is trying to arrest him without sufficient ground while claiming that it is not serious in conducting the general election on March 5, 2026.

During his first interaction with editors and senior journalists in Kathmandu, Oli said his party, CPN-UML, will seek reinstatement of the dissolved House of Representatives.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Republican Turkish Party leader Tufan Erhurman and his wife, Nilden Erhurman, cast their ballots at a polling station during the Turkish Cypriot leadership election in the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on Sunday. AFP

Yemen's Houthi rebels detain 20 United Nations employees

Iranian-backed Houthi rebels detained two dozen UN employees Sunday, a day after they raided another UN facility in the capital Sanaa, a UN official said, reports AP from Cairo.

Jean Alam, a spokesman for the UN resident coordinator for Yemen, told The Associated Press that the UN staffers were detained inside the facility in Sanaa's southwestern neighbourhood of Hada.

He said those detained Sunday include five Yemenis and 15 international staff. He said the rebels released another 11 UN staffers after questioning.

He said the UN was contact with the Houthis and other parties "to resolve this serious situation as swiftly as possible, end the detention of all personnel, and restore full control over its facilities in Sanaa."

A second UN official, speaking spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the raid, said the rebels confiscated all communications equipment from the facility, including phones, servers and computers.

NK soldier defects to South Korea

A North Korean soldier defected to South Korea by crossing the heavily fortified Demilitarised Zone between the two countries on Sunday, the South's military said in a statement, reports Reuters from Seoul.

The soldier was taken into custody by South Korean guards who had been monitoring his movements, the military said, saying he would face an investigation over his defection.

Defections by North Koreans across the border are considered risky and most escapees make their way to the South through China or other third countries.

This is the first time a North Korean soldier has defected to the South since August last year.

Mourners and supporters of Kenya's opposition leader and former Prime Minister Raila Odinga react as his coffin arrives during the final day of his funeral proceedings at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University grounds in Bondo, on Sunday. AFP

Sarkozy heads to jail tomorrow

France's ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy is to be jailed on Tuesday over a scheme to acquire Libyan funding for his 2007 presidential run, becoming the first former head of an EU country to serve time behind bars, reports AFP from Paris.

Sarkozy, France's right-wing leader from 2007 to 2012, was convicted in late September of criminal conspiracy over a plan for late Libyan dictator Moamer Kadhafi to fund his electoral campaign.

The former state leader, who has appealed the verdict and denounced an "injustice", is to be incarcerated in the Parisian prison La Sante.

"If they absolutely want me to sleep in prison, I will sleep in prison -- but with my head held high," he told the press after his September 25 verdict.

A woman picks marigold flowers, used for garlands and prayers, before selling them in the market for Tihar, Nepal's version of Diwali, in Kathmandu on Sunday. REUTERS

Iran executes man for spying

Iran executed a man convicted of spying for Israel's intelligence agency, the judiciary said Sunday, the latest in a series of executions following a 12-day war in June between the two countries, reports AFP from Tehran.

"The execution of this spy... was carried out after confirmation by the Supreme Court and the rejection of his pardon request at Qom Prison," Kazem Mousavi, chief justice of Qom province, was quoted as saying by the judiciary's Mizan Online website. The identity of the man -was not immediately revealed.

Florida councilman censured over anti-Indian posts

WASHINGTON, PTI: A Florida councilman is facing backlash from lawmakers and Indian-American groups over a series of anti-Indian social media posts, local media reported.

Chandler Langevin, a Palm Bay City Council member, posted multiple messages over three weeks attacking the Indian community and calling for their deportation.

"Today is my birthday and all I want is for @realDonaldTrump to revoke every Indian visa and deport them immediately. America for Americans," Langevin wrote in one post.

Another said: "If someone only hires Indians, sends remittances to India, campaigns in Indian elections, lobbies to fly Indian flags over American buildings, and has no family serving in our military, their loyalty is to India and they need to be deported."

Since September 29, Indian-American residents and advocacy groups have condemned his remarks and demanded his resignation.

On Friday, the Palm Bay City Council voted 3-2 to censure Langevin. The resolution removes him from panels, silences him during commissioner comments, and requires council consensus to place items on agenda.

Pakistan, Afghanistan agree to ceasefire

Talks facilitated by Qatar, Turkiye lead to breakthrough

ISLAMABAD, PTI

Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire and setting up of "mechanisms" to ensure lasting peace after days of violent clashes along the border that left several soldiers, civilians, and terrorists dead on both sides, officials said on Sunday.

The breakthrough came following negotiations between Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Afghanistan's acting Defence Minister Mullah Yaqoob in Doha, facilitated by Qatar and Turkiye, according to a statement issued by Qatar's Foreign Ministry.

Afghan Defence Minister Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid and Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif shake hands following the signing of a ceasefire agreement in Doha on Sunday. REUTERS

"During the negotiation, both sides agreed to an immediate ceasefire and establishment of mechanisms to consolidate lasting peace and stability between the two countries," the statement read.

The two neighbours also agreed to hold "follow-up meetings" in the coming days to ensure the "implementation" and "sustainability" of the truce "in a reliable and sustainable manner" to achieve security and stability in both countries, it said.

The development comes amid heightened tensions along the Pak-Afghan border, triggered by cross-border clashes after alleged Pakistani airstrikes near Kabul last week.

The Doha talks began on Saturday with Pakistan urging the Afghan Taliban authorities to take "verifiable action" against the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, which Islamabad accuses of launching cross-border terrorist attacks from Afghan soil.

The Foreign Office in a statement on Saturday said Pakistan had stressed the need for the Afghan authorities to honour their "commitments to the international community" and to address Islamabad's "legitimate security concerns" by taking verifiable action against terrorist entities. "Pakistan appreciates the mediation efforts of Qatar and hopes these discussions contribute to peace in the region," it said.

Trump urges Zelenskyy to cut a deal with Putin or face destruction

REUTERS: US President Donald Trump urged Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to accept Russia's terms for ending the war between Russia and Ukraine in a White House meeting on Friday, warning that President Vladimir Putin threatened to "destroy" Ukraine if it didn't comply, the Financial Times reported on Sunday.

During the meeting, Trump insisted Zelenskyy surrender the entire eastern Donbas region to Russia, repeatedly echoing talking points the Russian president had made in their call a day earlier, the newspaper said, citing people familiar with the matter.

Ukraine ultimately managed to swing Trump back to endorsing a freeze of the current front lines, the FT said. Trump said after the meeting that the two sides should stop the war at the battle line; Zelenskyy said that was an important point.

The White House did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on the FT report.

Zelenskyy arrived at the White House on Friday looking for weapons to keep fighting his country's war, but met an American president who appeared more intent on brokering a peace deal.

Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelenskyy. REUTERS FILE

In Thursday's call with Trump, Putin had offered some small areas of the two southern frontline regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in exchange for the much larger parts of the Donbas now under Ukrainian control, the FT report added.

That is less than his original 2024 demand for Kyiv to cede the entirety of Donbas plus Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in the south, an area of nearly 20,000 square km.

Zelenskyy's spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment sent outside business hours on whether Trump had pressured Zelenskiy to accept peace on Russia's terms.

Israel halts aid to Gaza as ceasefire faces major test

JERUSALEM, AP

The fragile ceasefire in Gaza faced its first major test Sunday as an Israeli security official said the transfer of aid into the territory is halted "until further notice" after a Hamas ceasefire violation, and Israeli forces launched a wave of strikes.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity pending a formal announcement on the halt in aid, which is occurring a little over a week since the start of the US-proposed ceasefire aimed at ending two years of war.

Israel's military earlier Sunday said its troops came under fire from Hamas militants in southern Gaza. Health officials said at least 19 Palestinians were killed by Israeli strikes in central and southern Gaza.

Israel's military said it had struck dozens of what it called Hamas targets.

A senior Egyptian official involved in the ceasefire negotiations said "round-the-clock" contacts were underway to deescalate the situation. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorised to speak to reporters.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu directed the military to take "strong action" against any ceasefire violations but didn't threaten to return to war.

Israel's military said militants fired at troops in areas of Rafah city that are Israeli-controlled according to agreed-upon ceasefire lines. No injuries were reported. The military said Israel responded with airstrikes and artillery.

Hamas, which continued to accuse Israel of multiple ceasefire violations, said communication with its remaining units in Rafah had been cut off for months and "we are not responsible for any incidents occurring in those areas."

Shortly before sunset, Israel's military said it had begun a series of airstrikes in southern Gaza against what it called Hamas targets. It also said its forces struck "terrorists" approaching troops in Beit Lahiya in the north.

Strikes in Gaza

An Israeli airstrike on a makeshift coffeehouse in Zawaida town in central Gaza killed at least six Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Hamas planning attack against Gaza civilians: US

The US State Department on Saturday said it had "credible reports" that Palestinian armed group Hamas was planning an imminent attack against civilians in Gaza, a move Washington said would be a "ceasefire violation", reports AFP.

"This planned attack against Palestinian civilians would constitute a direct and grave violation of the ceasefire agreement and undermine the significant progress achieved through mediation efforts," said the State Department in a statement.

"Should Hamas proceed with this attack, measures will be taken to protect the people of Gaza and preserve the integrity of the ceasefire."

China launches Pak's remote sensing satellite

BEIJING, PTI: China on Sunday launched a Pakistani remote sensing satellite along with two of its own onboard a single rocket, further deepening space cooperation between the two all-weather allies.

A Lijian-1 Y8 carrier rocket carrying three satellites -- Pakistan remote-sensing satellite (PRSS-2), AIRSAT 03 and 04 satellites -- was launched from a commercial aerospace innovation pilot zone in northwest China, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The satellites were successfully placed in the planned orbit, it said.

This is the third Pakistani satellite launched by China this year. Earlier, it launched Pakistan Remote Sensing Satellite (PRSS-1) in July and PRSC-EO1 in January.

China has been helping Pakistan launch satellites in recent years, broadening their alliance into the space arena.

Last year, China launched a multi-mission communication satellite for Pakistan.

In 2018, China sent two Pakistan satellites into orbit -- the PRSS-1.

EU to hold urgent industry talks today on China rare-earth export curbs

BRUSSELS, AFP: EU industry chief Stephane Sejourne will hold urgent talks on Monday with European industries impacted by China's curbs on rare earths exports.

China, the world's leading producer of the minerals used to make magnets crucial to the auto, electronics and defence industries, this month announced new controls on the export of rare-earth technologies.

The European Union has already said the restrictions have forced some of the bloc's companies to halt production and inflicted economic harm.

Brussels is also coordinating with G7 partners on a response to China's curbs.

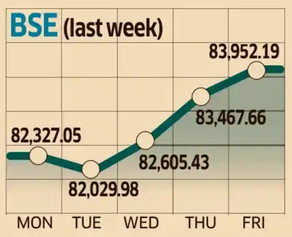
Now, Sejourne will convene executives from various industries by video link early Monday to assess the effects of China's move, and discuss what extra steps Brussels is taking, a source in his cabinet told AFP.

The meeting will include members of the auto, defence, wind energy, chemicals and mining processing sectors, especially those linked to European raw materials projects, the source added.

Sejourne will share details from the talks on Tuesday with EU commissioners meeting during the European Parliament's plenary session in Strasbourg, France.

Workers transport soil containing rare earth elements in Lianyungang, China. REUTERS FILE

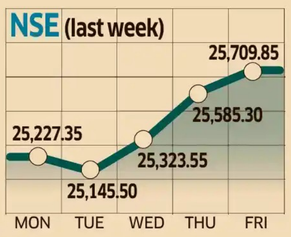
BSE (last week)



*Data as of Oct 17

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
ASIANPAINT	7.15%	TATA MOTORS	-5.51%
M&M	5.61%	INFY	-4.82%
ADANIPORTS	4.97%	TCS	-2.17%
BAJAJ FINANCE	4.54%	ETERNAL	-1.62%
TITAN	4.08%	TATASTEEL	-0.89%

NSE (last week)



TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
NESTLE INDIA	7.50%	TATA MOTORS	-41.59%
ASIAN PAINTS	7.16%	INFOSYS L	-4.87%
MAHI & MAHI	5.57%	WIPRO	-3.14%
ADANI PORTS	4.97%	TATA CONSULT	-2.18%
BAJAJ FINANCE	4.52%	INDUSIND BK	-1.62%

Sensex (52-week)

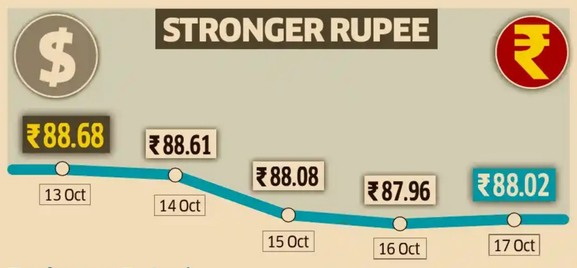
Oct 17, 2024	Oct 17, 2025	
81,006.61	83,952.19	3.64%

Nifty (52-week)

Oct 17, 2024	Oct 17, 2025	
24,749.85	25,709.85	3.87%

10-year Bond yield 6.50%

STRONGER RUPEE



Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹ 88.02	SGD	₹ 68.19
Pound	₹ 118.27	Yen (100 units)	₹ 58.66
Euro	₹ 102.98		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$61.29*
-0.38%
*Rate as of Oct 18

Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.92 ₹0%
Diesel* ₹90.99 ₹0%
*Rates as of Oct 18 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹ 27500 - 28000
Arabica Cherry	₹ 14400 - 16400
Robusta Parchment	₹ 17000 - 17500
Robusta Cherry	₹ 11200 - 12100

*Rates as on Oct 16

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹ 675
Cross Breed (CB)	₹ 559

*Average rates as on Oct 18

Data centre boom tests India's sustainability resolve

Critics question AP's ability to provide 2.7-4.1 mn gallons of water a day for Google's 1GW DC

SNV SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

In the fourth week of September, Google withdrew its $1 billion proposal to build an artificial intelligence (AI) data centre in Franklin Township, Indianapolis in the US. The last-minute decision came just minutes before a scheduled city-county council vote on September 22, 2025. The vote was widely expected to reject the proposal after sustained opposition from local residents and council members.

Organised under the banner 'Protect Franklin Township', residents raised strong objections over the project's expected water and energy consumption, fearing the massive facility would overburden local infrastructure and inflate utility bills.

Ironically, Indianapolis remains one of America's largest data centre hubs, yet it also reflects a growing domestic backlash against hyperscale projects. Even as US communities push back, India is moving in the opposite direction gearing up to welcome data centres at an unprecedented pace.

A recent report by Toronto-headquartered Colliers paints a picture of India's data centre (DC) sector entering a transformative phase. As of April 2025, the country's total installed capacity stood at 1,263 megawatts (MW), having grown more than fourfold over the past six to seven years. By 2030, the capacity is projected to cross 4,500 MW, attracting investment of $20–25 billion over the next 5-6 years.

This dramatic growth is driven by several converging factors like surging demand for digital and cloud services, the rapid adoption of AI and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, and rising internet penetration across urban and rural India. Add to this a supportive policy push from both central and state governments, and the stage is set for India's data centre ecosystem to become one of the largest in Asia.

At the city level, Mumbai dominates the space with a 41% share of total capacity, followed by Chennai (23%) and Delhi NCR (14%). The resulting expansion in physical space has tripled the real estate footprint of data centres across India's top seven markets, reaching 16 million square feet by April 2025.

Data centres - essentially vast warehouses of interconnected servers, routers, and switches - form the beating heart of the digital economy. From streaming platforms and cloud computing to AI model training and cryptocurrency mining, they keep the online world running around the clock.

The environmental debate playing out in the US offers a cautionary tale for India. According to the Washington-based non profit Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), the US hosted 5,426 data centres by March 2025. These facilities consumed about 17 gigawatts (GW) of electricity in 2022. By 2023, total consumption had skyrocketed to 176 terawatt-hours (Twh) equivalent to 4.4% of US electricity use while carbon emissions tripled to roughly 105 million metric tonnes. Over half of that electricity still comes from fossil fuels, intensifying the sustainability challenge. With such numbers, sustainability and community impact have become central to the debate around every new project.

Amid these concerns abroad, Google recently announced plans for a hyperscale AI and data hub in Visakhapatnam also called Vizag, Andhra Pradesh. The proposed 1-GW facility, the largest of its kind in India, will anchor what state officials call a green data corridor along the coast.

"Vizag offers a natural advantage for sustainable AI infrastructure with its port connectivity, renewable energy base, and coastal grid," said Syam Thommandru, London-based Director of Global Alliances at the US cybersecurity giant Zscaler. "The Google project is a major milestone in India's digital journey," he told *DH*.

India already has over 268 major data centres spread across Mumbai, Hyderabad, Delhi NCR, Bengaluru, and Chennai. Each hyperscale facility consumes as much electricity as about one lakh households and millions of litres of water per day. a reminder that the digital boom also strains essential natural resources.

Telangana, with 33 active data centres, is recognised as one of India's most mature DC markets.

Andhra's vision: Powering AI ambitions

Defending the project, Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh, credited with bringing Google's $15-billion investment to the state, argued that disruptive technologies often face misplaced skepticism.

"When computers were introduced in the secretariat in the 1990s, there were fears they would cause radiation or job loss. Had Chandrababu Naidu not taken that visionary leap, would Hyderabad have become Cyberabad today?" he asked, emphasising continuity of vision.

Lokesh added that Andhra Pradesh plans to build 6GW of data centre capacity in Vizag, supported by a dedicated economic corridor ensuring reliable power and water supply. "AI is here to stay. The question is whether we embrace it or get replaced," he said.

Independent technology analyst P Geethanand Reddy from Hyderabad struck a more pragmatic tone. "It's true that data centres consume large volumes of water for cooling. But globally, innovative systems now allow even seawater to be used. Singapore and Norway have already implemented such solutions. Being a coastal city, Vizag shouldn't face major water issues," Geethanandh Reddy told *DH*.

AI-driven deals push IT firms' revenue in Q2

Aligned with this trend AI skills are much in demand

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Indian IT services firms have witnessed strong momentum in their deal pipeline in the second quarter ended September 2025, mainly driven by artificial intelligence (AI)-led services.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has reported a total contract value of $10 billion in Q2 and its BFSI TCV stood at $3.2 billion. Its revenue from operations was up 2.4% year-on-year (YoY) at Rs 65,799 crore in the second quarter.

"Our TCV (total contract value) had a sequential increase of 6.5% and a year-on-year growth of 16%. More importantly, this quarter, we announced a significant mega deal win with Tryg Insurance. Based on client conversations, Q2 revenue growth and TCV, and a strong demand pipeline, we see FY26 international revenue growth to be better than last fiscal year," TCS CEO and MD K Krithivasan said, during the company's earnings conference call.

He added that the company will become the world's largest AI-led technology services company, enabling business, government and society.

The CEO also said that they are redesigning business value chains for every industry and they are also investing in development of innovative cross industry solutions leveraging AI.

IT services firms are now deepening their partnerships in the AI ecosystem. For instance, TCS has recently announced a partnership with Google Cloud to integrate Gemini Enterprise for its workforce and customers.

Infosys, which recently won a contract worth over Rs 14,100 crore from the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA), will use AI-driven tools to streamline workforce planning of the NHS.

The company's TCV of large deal wins was $3.1 billion, with net new of 67% in Q2.

"Strong deal wins, with 67% net new in Q2, reflect our deep understanding of clients' priorities to deliver value from AI in this environment", said Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh.

Enterprise AI companies are increasingly building modernisation solutions for clients, and Infosys is partnering with several of them, leveraging its deep knowledge of enterprise IT landscapes, Motilal Oswal said in its results update.

In Q2, Wipro closed $4.7 billion in TCV and signed 13 large deals. "Much of this demand is driven by vendor consolidations, AI-powered transformations, and consulting-led programmes—areas where our strategy is truly making an impact," Wipro CEO and MD Srini Pallia said.

Wipro's order bookings in Q2 include two mega deals- one with a healthcare client and another in BFSI. "While a significant portion of these two deals are renewals, they are important for deepening our presence and unlocking future growth in these accounts," the CEO added.

For the first time, HCLTech reported that its advanced AI quarterly revenue crossed $100 million.

Due to this AI-driven approach, AI skills are much in demand.

Demand for skills in artificial intelligence is common across several engineering categories, led by industrial engineering (17%), mechanical engineering (11%) and electrical engineering (9.2%), said hiring platform Indeed in its latest report. It said AI-related job postings rose to 11.7% in September.

Sachin Alug, CEO, NLB Services, said Q2 FY26 indicates a renewed wave of confidence across the IT sector, with firms accelerating investments in AI-driven transformation, digital innovation, and delivery expansion in key global markets. "The strong emphasis on building localised talent hubs, particularly in advanced technology and AI domains, reflects a strategic move towards reducing dependency on cross-border mobility while strengthening client delivery capabilities," he said.

Jewellers see strong demand for precious metals on Dhanteras

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Despite gold and silver prices touching a record high this festive season, the demand for precious metals has not come down. The jewellers across the country have witnessed robust demand during this festive season and dhanteras. The customer footfall has been exceptionally strong across metros and Tier-2, Tier-3, and Tier-4 cities and towns on the occasion of Dhanteras, which was celebrated partially on both Saturday and Sunday.

"Despite record-high gold prices, we're witnessing renewed enthusiasm this festive season. Consumers are viewing price volatility as a strategic opportunity to reinvest — whether through gold coins or by upgrading their existing jewellery. Our Zero Deduction Gold Exchange Program has seen a sharp rise in traction, with its contribution increasing from the usual 35–36% to 38–40% since Navratri," said Ajoy Chawla, CEO, Jewellery Division, Titan Company.

Overall growth is being driven by higher ticket values, while buyer growth remains in early single digits. With initiatives like our exchange program, consumers are converting idle gold into meaningful pieces that blend emotion, heritage, and value, he told *DH*.

With gold prices at record highs, demand for natural diamond-studded jewellery, crafted with minimal gold, has surged this season. In terms of design, the diamond jewellery featuring prized colored gemstones is becoming a big trend during this season. The bridal market, once dominated by gold, is seeing a strong shift toward natural diamonds that lab-grown or other gemstones can't replicate, Eshwar Surana, Managing Director, Raj Diamonds, said.

"We saw robust demand during this festive season & dhanteras and have already been witnessing strong footfalls across our showrooms. We also had an exceptionally strong festive season and have overall witnessed around 20% increase in demand this time compared to last year's festivities, despite rising gold prices," he said.

Gold prices were ruling at Rs 1,32,400 per 10 grams in Delhi on Saturday, witnessing a drop of Rs 2,400 compared to Friday, even as jewellery enthusiasts rushed to shops across the country to buy the precious metal on the auspicious day of Dhanteras, which marks the beginning of the Diwali festival.

"This festive season has been uniformly strong across markets, with consistently encouraging responses from metros as well as Tier-2/3 towns," said Arun Narayan, Senior Vice President, Tanishq.

Meesho files draft IPO papers to raise Rs 4,250 crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: Softbank-backed e-commerce firm Meesho has filed updated draft papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 4,250 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 4,250 crore and an offer for sale of up to 17,56,96,602 equity shares by certain existing shareholders.

The offer for sale includes the sale of equity shares by some of Meesho's early investors, including Elevation, Peak XV, Venture Highway and Y Combinator. According to sources, existing investors are looking to sell around 5-7% of their holdings. The valuation of the firm and the total size of the IPO of Meesho will depend on the share price band that will be disclosed later.

Meesho plans to utilise the net proceeds towards investment for cloud infrastructure in Meesho Technologies Private Ltd, payment of salaries of existing and replacement hires.

NCLT admits insolvency case against Blu-Smart Mobility Tech

NEW DELHI, PTI: The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has admitted an insolvency case against Blu-Smart Mobility Tech, the debt-ridden company which was providing all-electric ride-hailing services and building a network of EV charging infrastructure in India.

The Ahmedabad bench of NCLT has admitted the insolvency plea filed by Lepton Software Export and Research against Blu-Smart Mobility over an unpaid amount of Rs 5.84 crore, and appointed Pawan Kumar Goyal as the interim resolution professional, suspending the board of the company.

A two-member bench said there is an operational debt, which has been defaulted by Blu-Smart Mobility, and its operational creditor is entitled to recover it. "The respondent/corporate debtor Blu-Smart Mobility Pvt Ltd is admitted in the Corporate Insolvency Resolution process under section 9(5) of the code," it said.

Moreover, the NCLT also placed Blu-Smart Mobility Tech under the protection of a moratorium as per the provisions of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and directed the IRP to take full charge of Blu-Smart Mobility's assets and documents.

The NCLT order came over a petition filed by Lepton Software.

DH INTERVIEW

'Green bonds & sustainability-linked loans reshaping urban growth financing'

India's experience shows that sustainable finance is not only about mobilising capital but about changing how value is understood. When financial products reward efficiency, transparency, and long-term impact, they build confidence among investors and generate real economic benefits for communities. *DH's* **Mrityunjay Bose** spoke to **Aidee Olmo**, principal, Sustainable Finance, US Green Building Council (USGBC) and Green Business Certification Inc (GBCI), "When a bank can rely on verifiable performance data from programmes such as LEED (Leadership in energy and environmental design), it gains the confidence to lend more competitively to sustainable projects. This alignment is what truly accelerates market transformation," she says. Edited excerpts:

What are the roles of sustainable finance instruments in advancing India's green building sector?

Finance is often the bridge between ambition and implementation. In India, sustainable finance instruments are playing this role effectively, turning sustainability goals into measurable results. They are helping developers, planners, and investors move from intent to action by linking capital to performance. The real strength lies not only in the availability of funds but in their design. When loans and investments account for the long-term benefits of sustainable buildings such as lower operating costs, higher occupancy, and reduced risk, sustainability becomes part of the business logic.

Can you provide real-life examples of green finance applications in India's realty and infrastructure sectors?

India offers tangible examples of how green finance creates both environmental and economic value. The Delhi Metro pioneered climate-aligned funding for transport, setting a precedent across Asia. In housing, lenders such as HDFC and the State Bank of India have introduced green home products that lower borrowing costs for certified sustainable projects. Developers in Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad are using these instruments to attract institutional investors who value long-term performance and resilience. Information from the Reserve Bank of India, the World Bank, and the India Green Building Council confirms the scale of this transition. What was once considered an innovative niche has become mainstream finance. Today, environmental criteria are increasingly part of how real estate and infrastructure projects are structured, evaluated, and priced.

Aidee Olmo

How do GBCI's certification programmes, including LEED, align with India's green finance frameworks to promote sustainable growth?

Certification programmes help align the financial and technical sides of sustainability. They give lenders and investors reliable evidence that a building meets recognized standards in energy, water, and material efficiency. In India, these certifications are gaining ground as a way to strengthen confidence in a project's performance and reduce perceived risk. At the policy level, this alignment is also visible. Sebi's green debt guidelines and the Ministry of Finance's ongoing taxonomy work emphasize transparency and measurable results. Certification systems complement these efforts by offering an independent verification tool that helps financial institutions link capital flows to genuine sustainability outcomes. At GBCI India, we see great opportunity in this alignment. LEED and other GBCI programs provide the credibility and consistency that the financial community needs.

What is your view on the future of sustainable finance in India and its potential to drive both environmental and economic progress?

The outlook for sustainable finance in India is highly promising. With a young population, fast-growing cities, and clear national commitments on climate, the conditions for large-scale progress are already in place. The next step is to make sustainability an integral part of financial decision-making, not a specialized product line. Insights from Reserve Bank publications and discussions among industry leaders show that this shift is underway. Banks and investors are increasingly recognizing that sustainability enhances competitiveness and stability.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Hyundai Motor
(ID: HYUNDAI)
BUY
Upside +27%**
Last close ₹2,349
Target: ₹2,979*

Laurus Labs
(ID: LAURUSLABS)
BUY
Upside +12%**
Last close ₹901
Target: ₹1,010*

LTIMindtree
(ID: LTIM)
BUY
Upside +19%**
Last close ₹5,592
Target: ₹6,650*

LT Foods
(ID: LTFOODS)
BUY
Upside +33%**
Last close ₹420
Target: ₹560*

Delhivery
(ID: DELHIVERY)
BUY
Upside +16%**
Last close ₹466
Target: ₹540*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

Riding out market swings with low volatility investing

Indian equity markets have rewarded long-term investors with strong gains over three, five, and ten-year periods. Yet, the past twelve months have been different. Broader indices have slipped about 4%, creating a sense of unease for retail investors who had grown accustomed to steady compounding. These swings are part and parcel of equity investing, but they can test patience. That is why strategies that focus on lower volatility attract attention during such phases. They may not capture every surge in a roaring rally, but they help smooth the ride when markets stumble.

Decoding low volatility

Volatility measures the extent to which an asset or security's price fluctuates over time, typically expressed as the standard deviation of its returns. Simply put, it reflects the degree of price movement. Fewer swings translate to a steadier experience, making it easier for investors to remain committed for the long run. The large-cap focused Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 Index captures this principle.

The Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 Index is what is called a smart beta index. It is built around the "low volatility" factor, which means it picks 30 stocks from the Nifty 100 universe that have shown relatively stable price movements. By focusing on companies with a track record of lower fluctuations, the index aims to give investors equity exposure with a steadier experience compared to the broader market. This is because it assigns higher weights to the most stable stocks. The index is rebalanced semi-annually.

The index's approach tilts the portfolio toward consistency and cushions portfolios in uncertain times. This is why exchange traded fund variant like Nifty 100 Low Vol 30 ETF, and fund of funds offering like Nifty 100 Low Vol 30 ETF FOF bear consideration.

How returns fare

Over time, the Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 index strategy has shown that stability can coexist with growth.

As on August 29, 2025, the Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 index delivered around 19.5% in the last five years. Since inception, the compounded annual growth rate stood close to 17.8%.

In contrast, Nifty 50 has provided 17.91% in the last 5 years and 12.8% since inception.

CHINTAN HARIA
PRINCIPAL - INVESTMENT STRATEGY, ICICI PRUDENTIAL AMC

History shows that the Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 has tended to fall less during major market downturns. In periods such as the global financial crisis, the European debt crisis, the 2015–16 market sell-off, and the Covid-19 shock, this index saw smaller drawdowns compared to the Nifty 100 and Nifty 50. By cushioning losses in tough times, the strategy helps investors stay invested with greater confidence and discipline.

Thus, the low volatility underlying index's ability to generate healthy returns while limiting drawdowns compared to the broader market comes to the fore.

Ways to access the index

Investors do not need to worry about replicating the Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 index on their own. The strategy is available through an Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) route and a Fund of Fund (FOF) option.

Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 ETF trades on the stock exchange just like a share. This makes it a good option for investors who already have a Demat account and like transacting directly.

On the other hand, the Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 FOF brings the same exposure through the mutual fund route, without the need for a Demat account. It supports SIPs and is often the easier entry point for beginners. Both formats track the same index, so the choice comes down to convenience and comfort. Both are cost-effective options.

Usefulness

Low volatility investing offers an appealing blend of growth potential and relative calm. The index represents a diversified set of large, established companies across fast moving consumer goods, healthcare, financials, automobiles, technology, and more.

The underlying strategy is rule-based and transparent. This approach helps remove biases in selection. For conservative investors, this can serve as a core equity holding. For more aggressive investors, it can complement other funds by bringing balance to the portfolio.

Recent swings have shown that markets can test even experienced investors. The Nifty 100 Low Volatility 30 Index, and the ETF and FOF built on it, make it possible to combine equity growth with a steadier journey.

For retail investors looking for long-term wealth creation without constant stress, this may well be the calmer route to stay invested.

How insurance is evolving around demand for EVs

It often remains overlooked - an afterthought rather than a crucial aspect of vehicle ownership

POOJA YADAV

The electric vehicle (EV) market is experiencing unprecedented growth, with expectations for continued expansion in the coming years. Consumers are adopting EVs in response to the environmental concerns, government incentives and technological advancements. This shift is creating a new frontier in the insurance industry with specialised, tailored products to cater to meet the specific requirements of EV owners.

In India, the EV segment has emerged as a transformative force, now valued at over $100 billion and significantly contributing to the economy.

The automotive landscape

With India aiming for 30% EV penetration by 2030, there is a pressing need to look beyond traditional insurance models and offer specialised insurance products that address the unique opportunities and challenges arising in this evolving market.

The EV challenge

With rising fuel prices and increasing concerns over carbon emissions from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, EVs present a compelling alternative for both consumers and manufacturers. Supportive government policies are further enhancing the attractiveness of EVs. However, EV insurance often remains overlooked, regarded as an afterthought rather than a crucial aspect of vehicle ownership. Insuring EVs entails unique challenges, such as higher costs associated with technology and repairs. Addressing these challenges can empower consumers and bolster the industry, paving the way for a more secure and sustainable future.

Leveraging technology

Insurers can capitalise on technological advancements that play a crucial role in the relationship between insurance and EVs. Tools such as telematics, the Internet of Things (IoT), and AI-driven analytics are essential for risk assessment, preventative maintenance, and real-time monitoring. Insurance companies must utilise these technologies to offer customized coverage, predictive maintenance programs, and dynamic pricing models, thereby enhancing risk assessment accuracy and allowing fleet managers to operate more profitably and safely.

Many insurers have recognised the unique needs of EV owners and taken a proactive approach by introducing innovative insurance solutions specifically designed for electric and hybrid vehicles. Insurers' key offerings may include private charging station cover, personal accident cover, battery coverage.

Consumer usage patterns

Analysing how consumers use EVs is vital for designing effective insurance policies. Factors such as distance driven, charging habits, and varied usage environments influence the risk profile of electric vehicles. Equipped with onboard sensors and telematics systems, EVs can function as mobile data hubs, collecting information on speed, acceleration, braking, battery performance, energy consumption, and location. By employing data analytics, insurers can gain insights into these usage patterns, allowing for tailored coverage and incentives that align with sustainable practices and safe driving behaviours.

Evolving products

New-age insurers offer a range of motor insurance products, including standalone third-party cover, standalone own-damage cover, comprehensive cover, and bundled long-term options for new vehicles. Additionally, by tracking driving patterns and safe behaviour, insurers can offer flexible premiums based on real-time data with features like Pay As You Drive (PAYD) and Pay How You Drive (PHYD). allowing customers to save on premiums. These insurance models of usage-based insurance aligns well with eco-conscious EV owners, rewards responsible driving and helps build customer loyalty.

As India transitions towards eco-friendly transportation, the government is also taking significant steps to enhance the EV landscape. Initiatives like the battery-swapping policy announced in the 2022 Union Budget aim to expedite EV adoption, creating favourable conditions for the insurance sector.

Tailoring insurance

As the EV sector grows, insurers must seek clarity on coverage specifics. EV technology, including advanced battery systems and unique repair protocols, requires a deeper understanding beyond traditional vehicle underwriting. The changing landscape demands clear policies outlining coverage amounts and risks, particularly as incidents like EV fires highlight the importance of comprehensive insurance.

Global best practices

In markets like China and Brazil, insurers are proactively developing effective EV insurance policies. In China, partnerships between insurers and automakers allow for real-time data collection on EV performance, leading to more accurate risk assessments. Brazil has focused on specialized products that cover battery replacement and charging infrastructure. These initiatives have stabilized premiums and reduced uncertainties in the insurance landscape.

Fostering consumer awareness

Despite slightly higher insurance costs for EVs compared to traditional vehicles, it is crucial for consumers to understand the specifics of their coverage. With India aiming to become the third-largest EV market globally, policymakers and insurers must develop clear, well-defined policies. Encouraging consumers to review their insurance options carefully can foster a collaborative environment, empowering both the automotive and insurance sectors to promote a cleaner, more efficient future.

By crafting insurance solutions that address the specific risks and benefits of EVs, insurers can play a crucial role in not only managing risk but also advancing India's journey toward greener, sustainable mobility.

(The writer is Chief Product Officer, Zuno General Insurance)

After 3 months, FPIs pump in Rs 6,480 cr in Oct

NEW DELHI, PTI: After withdrawing money on a net basis for the past three months, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have turned buyers with a Rs 6,480 crore investment in October so far, driven by strong macroeconomic factors.

The development comes after persistent outflows in recent times, with FPIs pulling out Rs 23,885 crore in September, Rs 34,990 crore in August, and Rs 17,700 crore in July, data from depositories showed.

The renewed inflow in October marks a significant shift in sentiment and reflects fresh confidence among global investors towards Indian markets. Several key drivers underpin this reversal.

According to Himanshu Srivastava, Principal, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, India's macro backdrop remains relatively strong among emerging markets, with stable growth, manageable inflation, and resilient domestic demand helping the country stand out.

He further noted that global liquidity conditions are gradually easing, with expectations of rate cuts or at least a pause in the US. As risk appetite returns, funds are flowing back into higher-return emerging markets. Additionally, Indian valuations, which had been under pressure, have now turned more attractive, prompting renewed "dip-buying" interest.

Echoing a similar view, Geojit Investments Chief Investment Strategist VK Vijayakumar said the principal reason for this shift in FPIs' strategy is the reduced valuation differential between India and other markets.

Mcap of 7 of top-10 firms surges by Rs 2.16 lakh crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most valued firms surged by Rs 2,16,544.29 crore last week, with Reliance Industries and Bharti Airtel stealing the limelight, in tandem with an optimistic trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,451.37 points or 1.75%.

From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance and Hindustan Unilever were the gainers, while Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced erosion from their valuation.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 47,363.65 crore to Rs 19,17,483.71 crore, the most among the top-10 firms.

Bharti Airtel added Rs 41,254.73 crore taking its valuation to Rs 11,47,235.08 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of ICICI Bank surged by Rs 40,123.88 crore to Rs 10,26,491.35 crore and that of HDFC Bank rallied Rs 33,185.59 crore to Rs 15,40,210.78 crore.

The valuation of Bajaj Finance climbed Rs 28,903.45 crore to Rs 6,65,899.19 crore.

The mcap of Hindustan Unilever edged higher by Rs 17,774.65 crore to Rs 6,12,009.78 crore and that of State Bank of India went up by Rs 7,938.34 crore to Rs 8,20,924.98 crore.

However, the valuation of Infosys dropped by Rs 30,306.35 crore to Rs 5,98,773.87 crore. The mcap of TCS declined by Rs 23,807.01 crore.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Markets to keep their cheer

Midcap IT stocks to stay in focus, auto stocks to see an uptick

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

This week, Indian equities are likely to edge higher, supported by healthy Q2 earnings so far, robust festive demand, optimism over a potential India–US trade deal, and renewed FII buying in recent sessions.

Midcap IT stocks would be in focus after Persistent Systems and LTI Mindtree reported better-than-expected results and guiding for sustained revenue momentum backed by strong deal wins.

Auto stocks are expected to witness an uptick in festive bookings and delivery momentum during Dhanteras and Diwali. FMCG counters may also stay active after Nestlé India's results exceeded expectations. Urban demand recovery, aided by GST 2.0 reforms and income tax relief, should support volume growth for the FMCG sector.

Markets on Monday will react to the quarterly results of index heavyweights such as Reliance Industries, which announced its earnings on Friday, and HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, UltraTech Cement, among others, that reported results over the weekend.

Globally, the US appears to be warming up to the idea of a comprehensive trade deal with India as it looks to diversify critical supply chain away from China. On the macro front, investors will track key data releases, including India's manufacturing and services PMI, US CPI data, and China's Q3 GDP.

In Samvat 2081, Nifty50 was up by 6.2% (between 31st Oct'24 to 17th Oct'25), while broader market ended on a mixed note with Nifty Midcap100 up by 5.0%, and Smallcap100 down by 2.6%. Over the past year, Indian equities have held firm despite global trade frictions and geopolitical uncertainties, supported by strong domestic institutional and retail participation and proactive monetary measures by the RBI. As we usher into a new Samvat 2082, India stands at a defining point in its economic and market journey-marked by reform momentum, macro resilience, and a maturing domestic investor base. For Samvat 2082, we expect domestic cyclicals and structural growth themes to do well. We are positive on sectors such as BFSI and Capital Markets, Consumption, Manufacturing (EMS/Defence/Industrial) and Digital.

Diwali week augurs well for consumption, lifting investor spirits too.

Last week, Nifty50 ended higher by 425 points at 25,710 (+1.7%) while the broader market indices Nifty Midcap100 and Nifty Smallcap100 closed on a flattish note. Most of the sectoral indices ended in the green, led by realty (+4.1%), FMCG (+3.0%) and banking (+1.9%) sectors. Meanwhile, IT, PSU banks and metals were down between 0.6% to 1.8% each. Defence stocks remained in focus after the defence minister announced that exports are expected to touch 50,000 crore, crediting the private sector for driving India's self-reliance push, with a target of 3 lakh crore in domestic defence production by 2029. Gold surged past the $4,300 mark on COMEX, marking its strongest week in five years with over 50% YTD gains.

There was heightened activity in the primary markets with six mainboard IPOs listing on the exchanges last week. Tata Capital debuted on October 13 with a mild 1% gain, while LG Electronics India next day stole the spotlight with a strong 50% listing gains.

India's retail sector is showing encouraging signs of recovery, with festive demand gradually improving after a muted start. Structural trends such as rising mall footfalls, steady inventory build-up, and improving consumer sentiment point to sustained normalisation. Value and electronics categories are leading growth, aided by GST rationalisation, affordability, and stronger engagement. Overall, the sector outlook remains positive, backed by stable pricing, adequate inventories, and firm festive momentum.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd)

DH REVIEW

iPhone 17: Premium features without expensive 'Pro' price-tag

ROHIT KVN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Last month, Apple unveiled the iPhone 17, 17 Pro, and the all-new iPhone Air. While the iPhone Air grabbed everyone's attention, the iPhone 17 deserves recognition for its significant upgrades in display, processor, battery life, and camera.

Design, build quality & display

The iPhone 17 sports a 6.3-inch Super Retina XDR display with ProMotion technology, which enables adaptive 120Hz refresh rate, a first for a non-Pro model to date. This feature enables smoother scrolling, immersive gaming, and delightful multimedia viewing experience. Its Ceramic Shield 2 guard, also used in the Pro model, is touted as the industry's toughest glass. The screen guard is three times sturdier than its predecessor.

The back features a vertically aligned dual-camera module and a frosted matte glass finish that resists fingerprints. Though lacking ceramic shield protection, it's scratch-resistant. The aerospace aluminium frame ensures a solid grip, and the device carries an IP68 rating, surviving depths of up to six metres for 30 minutes in fresh water-body.

Besides the dedicated camera control key, and a programmable action button, notable additions include always-on display. FaceID continues to set the standard for facial recognition-based biometric security on phones.

Performance

The iPhone 17 is powered by Apple's proprietary A19 chip with six-core CPU, five-core GPU (with dedicated Neural Accelerators), and 16-core Neural Engine. It can handle daily tasks effortlessly. It also stays stable during heavy duty tasks such as gaming, 4K video recording and running AI applications.

The N1 chip enables Wi-Fi 7, and Bluetooth 6, and delivers reliable wireless connectivity for features like Personal Hotspot and AirDrop.

Safety features include crash detection and, in select countries, it supports satellite connectivity for emergencies.

The battery lasts a full day with normal use. It supports 40W wired, and 30W MagSafe wireless charging.

Camera

It houses a Dual Fusion camera system featuring a primary 48MP sensor and a 48MP ultra-wide sensor with LED flash. It excels in various lighting conditions. With night mode, it also gets sharp shots with minimal noise. The ultra-wide mode captures expansive landscapes without distortion, and the 2x telephoto feature provides optical-quality zoom.

Further, ultra-wide sensor can also capture detailed macro photos in close-up range. The device can record high-quality Dolby Vision 4K videos at 60 frames per second.

The 18MP front-facing Center Stage camera excels with high-resolution selfies. Thanks to the new camera system, users can capture photos and videos in portrait or landscape while holding their iPhone vertically. For group selfies, the center stage for photos uses AI to automatically expand the field of view and can rotate from portrait to landscape to include everyone in the frame. It also supports dual capture for simultaneous front and rear video recording.

Final verdict

With premium features packed into the iPhone 17, it offers exceptional value, making the upgrade to the Pro model feel unnecessary.

The iPhone 17 is available in lavender, mist blue, sage, white, and black. And, it comes in two storage options--256GB and 512GB -- for Rs 82,900 and Rs 1,02,900, respectively.

Veeresh headlines Tumkur win

BENGALURU, DHNS: Veeresh KC's seven-wicket haul was well supported by his teammates Mohammed Hamza Shaik, Vishnu Swaroop B and K Abhishek as Tumkur Zone posted a seven-wicket win over Raichur Zone in a game that saw 33 wickets fall in just 112.9 overs in the KSCA under-16 Inter Zonal cricket tournament here at the RWF ground.

Batting first, Raichur Zone were bowled out for 66 in 31 overs, thanks to a collective bowling effort from Hamza (3/24), Vishnu (2/17) and Abhishek (2/6).

In reply, Tumkur were shot out for 98, with Yashkumar Nishad (3/32) and Chetan Rangraj (3/11) claiming three-fors.

In Raichur's second essay, Veeresh picked up an exceptional 7/25 to break the backbone of their batting line-up before his side wrapped the chase up in 9.4 overs to take all six points.

LOCAL CRICKET

Brief scores: AT RWF: Raichur Zone: 66 all out in 31 overs (Mohammed Hamza Shaik 3-24, Vishnu Swaroop B 2-17, K Abhishek 2-6) & 70 all out in 25 overs (Veeresh KC 7-25) lt to Tumkur Zone: 98 all out in 47.5 overs (Shiva Shankar SR 2-20, Yashkumar Nishad 3-32, Chetan Rangraj 3-11, Mohammed Shamsheer 2-11) & 39/3 in 9.4 overs. **Tumkur Zone: 6 points; Raichur Zone: -1 point.**
At the Sports School: Bangalore City XI: 275/5 in 90 overs (Niranjan Ashok 142 n.o., Abhinav Kulkarni 38, Vedant Shaurya 40; Ranjan Pai 2-50, Yeshas Gowda BK 2-37) & 67/1 in 20 overs (Niranjan Ashok 37 n.o.) drew with Mangalore Zone: 214 all out in 68 overs (Avaneesha SN 45, Mohammed Fariq Tonse Shiek 42, Yeshas Gowda BK 37, Davin Glenn Mascarenhas 28; Shrish Khan 3-19, Ajay Kumara 4-54). **Bangalore City XI : 3; Mangalore Zone: 1.**
AT BGS: Vice President's XI: 211/6 in 90 overs (Vismai PM 34, Sanjit Sathish 65 n.o., Aakash Suresh 25 n.o.; Rohan R Gowda 2-37, Gaurav MV 2-24) & 97/1 in 23 overs (Ekansh Roul 38 n.o., Syaamantak Anirudh 49 n.o.) drew with Mysore Zone: 123 all out in 58.1 overs (Chavanth R Gowda 29; Aarav Bajaj 4-44, P Jayanth Abhiram 3-14, Aakash Suresh 2-10). **Vice President's XI : 3; Mysore Zone: 1.**
AT CMR UNIVERSITY: Shivamogga Zone: 165 all out in 73.5 overs (Rohan A 55, Guruprasad TG 33, Bhargav D 26; Om Agarwalla 4-33, Arjun Balu 4-24) & 88/5 in 31.3 overs (Rohan A 30, Chethan C 3-23) drew with Secretary's XI: 134 all out in 59 overs (R Rohith Reddy 28; Gagan DR 3-30, Gokul AM 3-17, Bhargav D 2-3). **Shivamogga Zone: 3; Secretary's XI: 1.**
AT IAF: Dharwad Zone: 167 all out in 86 overs (Hyderali Sayyed 25, Pruthviraj Golihalli 36, Harishitgoud Totad 54; Suvik Gill 5-16, Swayam Shabadi 2-33, Rafa Poonacha Ballachanda 2-26) drew with Bangalore Zone: 216/8 in 72.5 overs (Aditya Jha 88, Rafa Poonacha Ballachanda 42, Suvik Gill 28 n.o.; Joshua Konnur 4-63, Harsha S Shanke 4-35). **Bangalore Zone: 3 & Dharwad Zone: 1.**
AT GREEN SPORTS VILLAGE: President's XI: 143 all out in 64.4 overs (Akshaj Kathuria 79 n.o., Vikram 30; Manish V Patil 4-28, Atharv S Deshpande 3-22) vs Combined City XI: 105/8 in 48.2 overs (Atharv S Deshpande 32 n.o.; Eshan Manigandan 3-18, Vikram 3-24). 1st innings unfinished due to rains. **President's XI: 1; Combined City XI: 1.**

Messi hat-trick steers Miami

MIAMI, AFP: A rampant Lionel Messi scored a sensational hat-trick to seal Major League Soccer's Golden Boot award on Saturday as Inter Miami roared into the playoffs with a 5-2 victory over Nashville SC.

The Argentine superstar tallied an astonishing 29 goals from 28 matches, with Los Angeles FC's Denis Bouanga and Nashville's Sam Surridge tied for second best with 24.

CRICKET WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

Indians make a big mess of it again

Hosts suffer hat-trick of defeats as England punch semifinal ticket

INDORE, PTI

India squandered a position of control to make a mess of their chase as they suffered a four-run defeat against England, their third on the trot, in the Women's World Cup here on Sunday.

Chasing 289 to win, India were cruising to victory but lost crucial wickets despite fifties by senior players Smriti Mandhana (88), Harmanpreet Kaur (70) and Deepti Sharma (50).

From needing 55 runs from 53 balls, India found themselves needing 14 of the last over with England holding their nerves as Sneh Rana and Amanjot Kaur failed to take the hosts across the line.

This was after seasoned off-spinner Deepti (4/51) produced a standout spell, helping restrict England to 288 for 8 which was built on the back of Heather Knight's (109) splendid century.

India now need to win their remaining two games to seal the last semifinal spot as England became the third team to move to the last four stage with the win here.

Mandhana first put up a crucial 125-run stand with skipper Kaur before joining forces with Deepti with a 67-run partnership. Once she was out Deepti took over with a fifty of her own but just as it looked like she'll go till the end, she threw away her wicket as England also got rid of the dangerous Richa Ghosh.

It was Mandhana's second consecutive half-century, a patient and hard-fought one, while Kaur, who had been out of touch through much of the competition, rediscovered her spark in trademark fashion, crafting a run-a-ball 70 that oozed intent and authority.

Mandhana, who started her innings in edgy fashion, nearly dragging one onto her stumps, weathered a scratchy start and even battled cramps but showed immense concentration and composure in her 94-ball innings.

After Pratika Rawal's early dismissal, Harleen Deol (24) assumed the role of aggressor, allowing Mandhana time to settle. Her first boundary only arrived in the 14th over, but once she found her rhythm, she became increasingly fluent.

Together, Mandhana and Kaur batted smartly, rotating strike, building pressure on England's bowlers, and rescuing India from an uncomfortable position. At the halfway stage of the innings India needed a 164 from 150 balls.

Both targeted world No. 1 spinner Sophie Ecclestone with intent, striking her for boundaries at crucial intervals.

Kaur, in particular, went after her counterpart Nat Sciver-Brunt, dispatching her for five fours. But the English captain bowled a back of a length delivery outside off to have Kaur caught by Emma Lamb.

Earlier, playing her 300th international game, Knight's (109) sweeping prowess was on full display as she laced her 91-ball innings with 15 boundaries and a six to get her third ODI ton and highest-ever score in WODIs.

For India, the dependable Deepti was the stand out bowler with captain Kaur relying on her seasoned off-spinner whenever India were in search of a breakthrough.

Ironically, the skipper chose to hold back Deepti up until the 16th over.

Brief scores: England: 288/8 in 50 overs (Amy Jones 56, Heather Knight 109, Nat Sciver-Brunt 38; Shree Charani 2-68, Deepti Sharma 4-51) bt India: 284/6 in 50 overs (Smriti Mandhana 88, Harmanpreet Kaur 70, Deepti Sharma 50; Nat Sciver-Brunt 2-47) by 4 runs. **PoM:** Heather Knight.

India's next match: Vs New Zealand (Oct 23, Navi Mumbai).

Today's match: Sri Lanka vs Bangladesh (3 pm).

Deepti Sharma (left) and Smriti Mandhana's good performances went in vain for India as composed England scored a hard-fought win in their Women's World Cup match in Indore on Sunday. AP/ PTI

Team	Played	Won	Lost	N/R	NRR	Points
Australia (Q)	5	4	0	1	+1.818	9
England (Q)	5	4	1	1	+1.490	9
S Africa (Q)	5	4	1	0	-0.440	8
India	5	2	3	0	+0.526	4
New Zealand	5	1	2	2	-0.245	4
Bangladesh	5	1	4	0	-0.676	2
Sri Lanka	5	0	3	2	-1.564	2
Pakistan	5	0	3	2	-1.887	2

Tanvi's golden quest ends in heartbreak

16-year-old goes down in straight games to Anyapat

GUWAHATI, PTI

Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma's bid to script history by winning a gold medal at the BWF World Junior Championships ended in heartbreak as she lost in straight games to Thailand's Anyapat Phichitpreechasak in the women's singles final here on Sunday.

The 16-year-old shuttler, who followed in the footsteps of former World No. 1 Saina Nehwal and Aparna Popat to become only the third Indian female shuttler to reach the final of the tournament, lost 7-15, 12-15 to the second-seeded Thai.

Tanvi thus signed off with a silver medal — India's first at the World Junior Championships in 17 years. Saina (gold in 2008 and silver in 2006) and Aparna (silver in 1996) are the only other Indian women to have won medals at the event.

It was a tight affair right from the start as both players moved neck and neck from 2-2 to 4-4, riding on each other's unforced errors.

The Thai's deceptive returns caught Tanvi at the front court as Phichitpreechasak opened up a 10-5 lead, with the Indian finding the net twice.

Two smashes from the Thai and a wide shot from Tanvi put Phichitpreechasak two points away from taking the opening game, which she eventually sealed when another backhand from the Indian buried into the net.

After the change of ends, Tanvi surged to a 6-1 lead with some precise deep returns. But errors crept in again. Two net mistakes allowed the Thai to narrow the gap to 5-7.

Phichitpreechasak went wide next, giving Tanvi a slender 8-5 lead at the interval.

However, the Thai made Tanvi lunge forward repeatedly, forcing more errors to move to 7-8 before levelling the score when Tanvi sprayed one long.

Another smash into the net gave Thailand player 9-8 advantage.

A down-the-line smash followed by another beautifully constructed point saw the Thai inch ahead 11-8.

Now dictating the rallies with confidence, Phichitpreechasak extended her lead to 12-8 with a lucky net cord.

Tanvi managed to halt the run with a neat net dribble, but the Thai continued to produce sharp cross-court winners that left the Indian searching for answers.

At 9-13, Tanvi responded with her own deft touch to stay in contention.

She won a disputed point after a long rally before sending one wide to hand the Thai three championship points.

Phichitpreechasak hit one wide but sealed the title moments later with a powerful smash.

Tanvi Sharma lost to Thailand's Anyapat Phichitpreechasak 7-15, 12-15 in the women's singles final in Guwahati on Sunday. BAI MEDIA

Rybakina stands tall in Ningbo

NINGBO (CHINA), AFP

Former Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina stormed back from a set down to capture the 10th title of her career with a 3-6, 6-0, 6-2 victory over Ekaterina Alexandrova in the Ningbo Open final in China on Sunday.

Rybakina fired 39 winners, including 11 aces, and won 88 percent of her first-serve points against Russia's Alexandrova to clinch her second trophy of the season.

The World No. 9 from Kazakhstan strengthened her chances of securing a WTA Finals qualification spot.

But she will need to reach the semifinals at next week's Pan-Pacific Open in Tokyo to move past Russia's Mirra Andreeva in the race for a place in Riyadh next month.

Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina admires her trophy after triumphing in the Ningbo Open . REUTERS

Fernandez triumphs

Canada's Leylah Fernandez beat Czech teenager Tereza Valentova 6-0, 5-7, 6-3 to win the Japan Open on Sunday, her second WTA title of the year.

Fernandez, the World No. 27, added to her victory at the DC Open in Washington in July by seeing off qualifier Valentova in Osaka.

Fernandez paid tribute to beaten opponent Valentova, who was playing in her first WTA final at the age of 18. Fernandez, playing with heavy strapping on her right thigh, cruised to the first set in a one-sided start to the final.

Medvedev ends drought

Daniil Medvedev won his first title in two years on Sunday, defeating Frenchman Corentin Moutet 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 in the final of the ATP 250 tournament in Almaty.

The Russian will compete in the ATP 500 in Vienna.

Gritty Railways defy K'taka

BENGALURU, DHNS

Railways' lower-order batters Virat Jaiswal and Abhishek Jaiswal scored fighting centuries to deny Karnataka an outright win in the opening round of the Elite Group D match of the Col CK Nayudu Trophy U-23 tournament here on Sunday.

After enforcing follow-on at the M Chinnaswamy on Saturday, hosts were the favourites to wrap up a big win as Railways were trailing by 343 runs on the final day while resuming at 41/0. Karnataka, in fact, were cruising to victory by tea with Railways reeling at 202/8 with the help of Hardik Raj's 6/87 spell.

However, Virat (108 not out off 223 balls) then forged a 117-run stand for the ninth wicket with Abhishek (102 off 202), who returned to the crease after getting retired hurt earlier. The partnership was eventually ended by Dhruv Prabhakar (2/47), who dismissed Abhishek with close to 17 overs of action left in the day. However, No. 11 Umar Malick (1 n.o. off 47 balls) saw out the rest of the overs for an unbeaten 20-run stand, allowing Virat to reach his century.

Railways got two points from the draw while Karnataka got 11 points through their first-innings lead. Karnataka are placed third in the Group D table behind Uttarakhand (12 points) and UP (11).

Brief scores: Karnataka: 529/7 decl drew with Railways:186 all out & (f/o) (O/n: 41/0): 339/9 in 111 overs (Anchit Yadav 47, Ansh Yadav 32, Abhishek Kaul 102, Virat Jaiswal 108 n.o.; Hardik Raj 6-87, Dhruv Prabhakar 2-47).

Railways U-23's Abhishek Kaushal scored 102 in a match-saving 117-run stand with Virat Jaiswal against Karnataka in Bengaluru. . DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR P S

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No. CEE/Tr(OP)Z/SEE(O)/AEE3/25-26/8052-54 & 8055-57 Dated:18.10.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION (KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites bids for the following: (1) Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/TKR/TOZ/SEE(O)/AEE3/2025-26/70 Dt:17.10.2025 for **Procurement of 18 no's Numerical Distance Relay for 400KV, 220KV, 110KV & 66KV Class Power Transformers with IEC 61850 communication protocol required for various capacity Power Transformers panel to various sub-stations/Divisions required for maintenance of sub-stations in Tumakuru Transmission (Operations) Zone.**
(2) Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/TKR/TOZ/SEE(O)/AEE3/2025-26/71 Dt:17.10.2025 for **Procurement of 20 no's Numerical Distance Relay for 400/220/110KV/ 66kV compatible to IEC 61850 communication protocol Required for Line panels to various sub-stations/Divisions required for maintenance of sub-stations in Tumakuru Transmission (Operations) Zone.**
The bids will be received through KPPP mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the KPP Portal & can be obtained by logging into kpp website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** and click on hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" **on or after 23.10.2025.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, (Elec.),
Transmissions (Operation) Zone, KPTCL,
Parasara Bhavana, 1st Floor, 66/11kV
Tumakuru S/S Premises, Tumakuru-03.

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL,
Dam Division, Almatti-586201. Phone: 08426-281027
E-mail:dam_division@rediffmail.com
No: KBJNL/DDA/DB/TND/2025-26/1986 Dated:17.10.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore the undersigned invites tender on Item Rate & Percentage basis from the eligible contractors for the work indents of **Two Cover** – (1) I .No. 2444/Call-3 (Others) - 70.83 Lakhs **Single Cover -** work indents of (1) I .No. 2523/Call-2 (Others)- 19.81 Lakhs. (2) I .No. 2401/Call-3 (OTHERS)- 12.66 Lakhs (4) 2466/Call-4 (Others)- 3.94Lakhs **Special repair work package indents- Single Cover** (1) I .No. 2406/Call-3 (OTHERS)- 13.19 Lakhs, **The contractor can have access and submit e-tender from 18.10.2025 to 03.11.2025 up to 5-00 PM. (Technical & Financial) Bid will be opened on 05.11.2025 at 11-00AM for Single covers & For Two Covers Technical Bid will be opened on Dt: 05.11.2025 & Financial Bid Opened on Dt: 08.11.2025** at the Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Almatti. For clarifications office of the undersigned may be contacted during office hours (Phone No. 08426-281027). Further information about electronic tendering can be had from kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
KBJNL, Dam Division, Almatti

ಪಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/409/ಕೆಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Ashoka wins main event

HYDERABAD RESULTS

Ashoka, from the stable of Donald Netto and ridden by Mukesh Kumar, won the upper division of the Bold Venture Plate, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Sunday.
1. Venus De Milo Plate - 1400M: Una Paloma Blanca (Mrs Rohini Thuppal) Surya Prakash 1; Bold Indian (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Tupac (B Nikhil) 3; Muaser (Ajeeth Kumar) 4; Wb: Dist, 2-3/4, 1-1/4L. T: 1:27.41. TB: MF Ali Khan. Fav: Una Paloma Blanca.
2. Bold Venture Plate (Div II) -1200M: Espionage (Prakash Babu) Kuldeep Singh 1; One N Only (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Vivaldo (Ashhad Asbar) 3; Diablo (Sai Kumar) 4; Not Run: Dali's Destiny. Wb: 1-1/2, 5-1/4L, Shd. T: 1:10.70. TB: D Netto. K. Fav: Diablo.
3. Rani Rudramma Devi Cup - 1600M: Krystallos (Aryama Sundaram) Ajeeth Kumar 1; Bholi Punjaban (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Lifes Journey (Naresh) 3; NRI Ultrapower (Akshay Kumar) 4; Wb: 1, Nk, 6-1/2L. T: 1:40.17. TB: Deshmukh. Fav: NRI Ultrapower.
4. Hard Held Plate - 1600M: Term Deposit (Suresh Chintamaneni) Ajeeth Kumar 1; Lake Michigan (Sai Kumar) 2; Bestie (Akshay Kumar) 3; Take A Breath (Sonu Kumar) 4; Wb: 6-1/2, 2, 3/4L. 1:39.65. TB: Deshmukh. Fav: Lake Michigan.
5. Kinnerasani Cup - 1400M: Rolls Royce (AC Muthiah) Abhay Singh 1; Glorious Power (Afroz Khan) 2; Gold Giver (Ekram Alam) 3; Pride Aside (B Nikhil) 4; Not Run: Colt Pistol & Miss Marvellous. Wb: 2-1/2, Nk, 2L. T: 1:25.87.16. TB: Satheesh. Fav: Miss Smiley Angel.
6. Bold Venture Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Ashoka (Prabhakar Chowdhary) Mukesh Kumar 1; Mikimoto (B Nikhil) 2; Calista Girl (Kuldeep Singh) 3; Encore (Nakhat Singhl) 4; Wb: 1, 3, 1-1/2L. T: 1:12.06. TB: D Netto. Fav: Lashka.
7. Peddapalli Plate - 1200M: Cape May (Rama Krishan Reddy) Ekram Alam 1; Swiss Girl (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Clarity (Kuldeep Singh) 3; Glimmer Of Hope (Gaurav Singh) 4; Wb: 2, 4, 1/2L. T: 1-14.01. TB: Leo Desilva. Fav: Clarity.
Bengaluru dividends:
I race: Rs 20w; 11, 10, 19p; Fc: Rs 29; Q: Rs 23; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 43; Tri: Rs 69 & 35; Ex: Rs 149 & 81.
II race: Rs 36w; Rs 11, 11, 12p; Fc: Rs 119; Q: Rs 103; Shp: Rs 22; Thp: Rs 28; Tri: Rs 383 & 233; Ex: Rs 465 & 212.
III race: Rs 62w; 18, 12, 14p; Fc: Rs 455; Q: Rs 176; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs 38; Tri: Rs 1,119 & 249; Ex: Rs 2,191 & 715.
IV race: Rs 22w; 12, 13, 15p; Fc: Rs 59; Q: Rs 35; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs 31; Tri: Rs 108 & 67: Ex: Rs 244 & 155.
V race: Rs 160w; 29, 20, 12p; Fc: Rs 2,416; Q: Rs 710; Shp: Rs 44; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 8,830 & 3,784; Ex: Rs 41,110 (c/o).
VI race: Rs 31w; 12, 15, 29p; Fc: Rs 148; Q: Rs 63; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 77; Tri: Rs 1,345 & 995; Ex: Rs 16,682 & 5,957.
VII race: Rs 68w; 18, 13, 16p; Fc: Rs 167; Q: Rs 92; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 53; Tri: Rs 619 & 189; Ex: Rs 3,374 & 1,590.
Jackpot: Rs 1,67,392 (c/o).
Runner-up: Rs 7,174 (10).
I treble: Rs 572 (6).
II treble: Rs 4,768 (c/o)

Pride Prince wins feature

PUNE RESULTS

Pride Prince, from the stables of Imtiaz Sait and ridden to victory by Mukesh Kumar, won the Enigma Trophy, the feature event of the Pune races on Sunday.
1. Goldbag Plate - 1600M: Floyd (Jaydev Mody) TS Jodha 1; Baleno (SA Amit) 2; Alexandria (Zervan) 3; Ma Cherie (SJ Sunil) 4; Wb: 4-1/4, 2-1/4, 2-3/4L. T: 1:40.66. TB: Behram Cama. Fav: Speak The Breed.
2. Enigma Trophy -1600M: Pride's Prince (Sudendu Shah) A Prakash 1; Madam Rich (G Vivek) 2; Mojito (NS Parmar) 3; Shubankar (Bharat Singh) 4; Wb: 2-3/4, 2-1/2, 6-1/2L. T: 1:38.09. TB: Imtiaz Sait. Fav: Madam Rich.
3. Oakwood Residence Pune Trophy - 1200M: Moonlight Kiss (Jiyaji Bhosale) Sandesh 1; Ariyana Star (Antony Raj) 2; Empower (TS Jodha) 3; Mila (A Omkar) 4; Wb: 1-1/2, 2-1/4, 2L. T: 1:08.90. TB: N Lagad. Fav: Moonlight Kiss.
4. Dakshin Maharashtra & Goa Sub-Area Trophy - 1200M: Ataash (Mrs Bakhtawar Chenoy) A Omkar 1; Fighton (NS Parmar) 2; Bashir (Antony Raj) 3; Emperor Roderic (Umesh) 4; Wb: 1/2, 3, 1-1/4L. 1:07.68. TB: Nazak Chenoy. Fav: Fighton.
5. Royal Barbershop Trophy - 1400M: Neptune (Geoffrey Nagpal) Sandesh 1; Ashwa Gypsy (Haridas Gore) 2; Believe (A Prakash) 3; Desert Classic (S Kamble) 4; Not Run: Disciplined. Wb: 1, 4-1/2, 1/2L. T: 1:25.69. TB: A Jodha. Fav: Neptune.
6. Dr PK Sardeshmukh Maharaj Trophy - 1200M: Esteban (Balam Mohla) Neeraj Rawal 1; Lucio (Aditya Waydande) 2; Santana Row (CS Jodha) 3; Ministry Of Time (Yash Narredu) 4; Wb: 2-3/4, 2, 1-3/4L. T: 1:08.69. TB: N Lagad. Fav: Esteban.
7. DN Zodge Plate - 1600M: Kavya (Prashant Nagar) NS Parmar 1; Shirsha (SG Prasad) 2; Black Thunder (Aditya Waydande) 3; Substantial (Sandesh) 4; Wb: 4-1/2, 2, 2-1/4L. T: 1:38.88. TB: MK Jadhav. Fav: Substantial.
Bengaluru dividends:
I race: Rs 25w; 11, 16, 15p; Fc: Rs 181; Q: Rs 117; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 567 & 159; Ex: Rs 3,024 & 3,456.
II race: Rs 18w; Rs 10, 11p; Fc: Rs 25; Q: Rs 12; Shp: Rs 22; Thp: Rs 18; Tri: Rs 26 & 25;
III race: Rs 17w; 14, 15, 17p; Fc: Rs 39; Q: Rs 31; Shp: Rs 40; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 153 & 101; Ex: Rs 373 & 142.
IV race: Rs 37w; 12, 12, 10p; Fc: Rs 112; Q: Rs 51; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 45; Tri: Rs 107 & 65: Ex: Rs 463 & 346.
V race: Rs 13w; 10, 39, 34p; Fc: Rs 155; Q: Rs 158; Shp: Rs 121; Thp: Rs 78; Tri: Rs 902 & 615; Ex: Rs 2,853 & 1,467.
VI race: Rs 24w; 12, 18, 15p; Fc: Rs 200; Q: Rs 118; Shp: Rs 47; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 448 & 275; Ex: Rs 830 & 262.
VII race: Rs 22w; 13, 42p; Fc: Rs 156; Q: Rs 47; Shp: Rs 68; Thp: Rs 27; Tri: Rs 228 & 148; Ex: Rs 2,749 & 2,209.
Jackpot: Rs 1,481 (287). **Runner-up:** Rs 157 (1160). **Treble:** Rs 239 (32).

NRI High Power for feature

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

NRI High Power, trained by Donald Netto and to be ridden by Mukesh Kumar, is fancied to win the Mir Mushtaq Ali Khan Memorial Cup, the feature event of the Hyderabad races run over a sprint at the races on Monday.
The first race starts at 1:50 pm.
1. Nijinsky Plate (Div II) - 1200M: Sharanga 1, Noorian 2, The Divinely 3.
2. Sircella Plate - 1400M: Elegant Lady 1, Arizona Sun 2, Special Star 3.
3. Sandown Park Plate - 1400M: Hugh Capet 1, D Minchu 2, NRI Sport 3.
4. Mir Mushtaq Ali Khan Memorial Cup - 1200M: NRI High Power 1, Zuza 2, Clara 3.
5. SS Cardmaster Memorial Cup - 1400M: Fortune Art 1, Hoping Star 2, Trust Me 3.
6. Nijinsky Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Foxy Girl 1, Ek 2, Dream To Fly 3.
Day's best: Sharanga. **Jackpot:** 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6. **I treble:** 1, 2 & 3. **II treble:** 4, 5 & 6.

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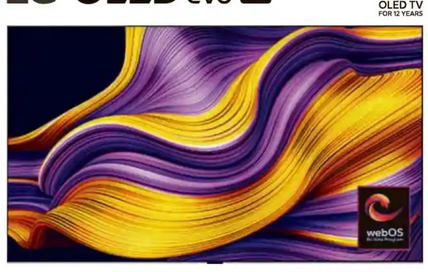

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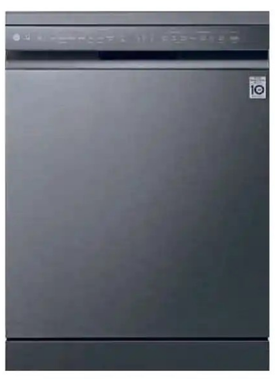

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Vrinda Dinesh

Karnataka women qualify for Super 8s

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka women's cricket team handed Hyderabad a 75-run defeat in their last Elite Group C match to qualify for the Super Eight stages of the Women's T20 Trophy at the Madhavrao Scindia Stadium in Gwalior on Sunday.

The margin of the victory proved decisive in taking Karnataka to the next stage as an improved net run rate of +1.635 helped the side finish second in the group ahead of third-placed Chattisgarh, who were level on 24 points with Karnataka but finished with an NRR of +1.329. While the top two qualified from the group, Haryana, also on 24 points, topped the group with an NRR of +1.747.

Karnataka bowlers fired in unison in the big win as Sahana Pawar, Pooja Kumar and skipper Niki Prasad took two wickets each to bundle out Hyderabad for 92 in 20 overs after D Vrinda (50) and Shishira Gowda's (51) half-centuries took Karnataka to 167/7.

While Vrinda and Shishira laid the foundation for the above-par total, lower-order batter BG Tejashwini delivered a 23-ball 35 not out down the order amid a middle-order collapse.

Karnataka will face either Railways or Delhi in their opening Super Eight match in Surat on October 25.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 167/7 in 20 overs (D Vrinda 50, Shishira Gowda 51, BG Tejashwini 35 n.o.; M Sakshi Rao 2-21, Vanka Pooja 2-27) bt Hyderabad: 92 all out in 20 overs (Mamatha 49; Sahana Pawar 2-19, Pooja Kumar 2-12, Niki Prasad 2-11).

CRICKET FIRST ODI

Rohit, Virat crash in comeback party

Legends fumble as India suffer 7-wicket defeat in opener

PERTH, PTI

The grand comeback party of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma endured a quick 22-ball ending, and their low-key outing reflected in India's seven-wicket defeat against Australia in the rain-affected first ODI here on Sunday.

Asked to bat first, India laboured to a sub-par 136 for 9, after the match was revised to 26 overs for a side courtesy several rain interruptions, leaving the hosts to chase a DLS target of 131, which they duly reached in 21.1 overs.

Travis Head fell to Arshdeep Singh early, slashing the left-arm pacer to Harshit Rana at deep third man, and Matthew Short too walked back without any significant contribution.

But skipper and local man Mitchell Marsh (46 not out, 52 balls) used his brute power to keep Australia ahead of the curve with a crucial 55-run partnership with Josh Philippe (37, 29b).

The Indian pacers — Arshdeep, Mohammad Siraj and Harshit Rana — could not replicate the control of their Australian counterparts, offering plenty of freebies to the hosts' batters.

Marsh fed on them with glee, crunching a six each of all three. An inside-out smash off Siraj over covers was the highlight.

Philippe gave his captain ample support with a busy knock, and his dismissal was a minor irritant in Australia's march, which culminated in them taking 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Earlier, India were robbed of the momentum by the constant weather interventions and relentless Australian new ball bowlers, except when KL Rahul (38, 30 balls) was in the middle. But before the skies opened up on several occasions, Australian bowlers used the extra bounce on the Optus Stadium pitch to get rid of two old foes. Rohit (8), who was also playing his 500th match for India, walked in alongside new captain Shubman Gill to loud cheers from the Perth crowd, but his stay was snapped after just 14 balls. Rohit played a sumptuous straight drive off Mitchell Starc, which offered a heady time ride back to the glory days.

But that was it for the day for the Mumbai man as Josh Hazlewood's ability to find steep bounce from the quarter length ended his tenure. The ever-rising ball kissed the sticker of Rohit's bat and travelled to debutant Matthew Renshaw at second slip. Kohli walked in amid even louder cheer, but the familiar ODI greatness was nowhere to be seen. In a pre-match chat, Kohli had detailed how Australia had often brought the best out of him as a batter.

But on this instance, Starc elicited the worst out of Kohli — first through a habitual prod outside the off-stump. It eventually consumed Kohli. A drive on the up off the left-arm pacer took the edge of his bat and Cooper Connolly at backward point snaffled a wonderful catch to curtail Kohli's agonising eight-ball innings. It was Kohli's first duck in Australia.

Now, the veterans need something substantial in the subsequent ODIs at Adelaide and Sydney to convince the powers that be of their fire for a longer journey.

Unlike his senior colleagues, skipper Gill looked assured but a rather casual attempt to flick Nathan Ellis resulted in a down the leg side catch to wicket-keeper Philippe. Vice-captain Shreyas Iyer perished in the same way. Hazlewood strangled him for space with a bouncer on ribcage that Iyer gloved to Philippe as India slid to 45 for four in the 14th over.

Finally, India found their wheels moving through a 39-run fifth-wicket alliance between Axar Patel (31) and Rahul before the former fell to spinner Matthew Kuhnemann. Rahul was quite impressive in his knock, dealing with the bounce effectively while getting on top of the ball nicely. The straight drive and pull off Ellis off successive balls for fours were from the top draw. Rahul slipped into overdrive once spinners were introduced, and slammed Matthew Short for two sixes in a row.

Rahul and Washington Sundar added 30 runs for the sixth wicket. But the limited number of overs and late flurry of wickets affected India's acceleration in the backend.

Ring rust was evident in both Rohit Sharma (left) and Virat Kohli in the opening ODI, the duo getting out for 8 and 0 respectively. AP/ AFP

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Rohit c Renshaw b Hazlewood	8
Gill c Philippe b Ellis	10
Kohli c Connolly b Starc	0
Iyer c Philippe b Hazlewood	11
Axar c Renshaw b Kuhnemann	31
Rahul c Renshaw b Owen	38
Sundar b Kuhnemann	10
Nitish (not out)	19
Rana c Philippe b Owen	1
Arshdeep (run out)	0
Siraj (not out)	0
Extras (LB-2, W-6)	8
TOTAL (for 9 wkts, 26 overs)	**136**

Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-21, 3-25, 4-45, 5-84, 6-115, 7-121, 8-123, 9-124.

Bowling: Starc 6-1-22-1, Hazlewood 7-2-20-2, Ellis 5-1-29-1, Owen 3-0-20-2, Kuhnemann 4-0-26-2, Short 1-0-17-0.

AUSTRALIA (T: 131 from 26 overs)

Marsh (not out)	46
Head c Rana b Arshdeep	8
Short c Rohit b Axar	8
Philippe c Arshdeep b Sundar	37
Renshaw (not out)	21
Extras (LB-3, W-8)	11
TOTAL (for 3 wkts, 21.1 overs)	**131**

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-44, 3-99.

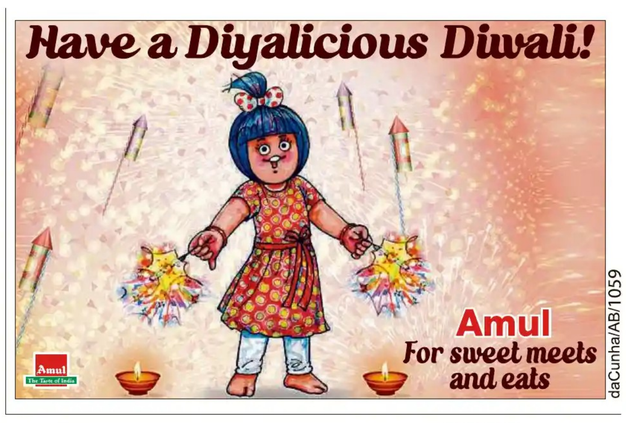
Bowling: Siraj 4-1-21-0, Arshdeep 5-0-31-1, Rana 4-0-27-0, Axar 4-0-19-1, Nitish 2.1-0-16-0, Sundar 2-0-14-1.

Result: Australia won by 7 wkts via DLS method.

Series: Australia lead 3-match series 1-0.

PoM: Mitchell Marsh.

Second ODI: Oct 23 (Adelaide).



Kohli credits hostile Aus environment for shaping him

PERTH, PTI

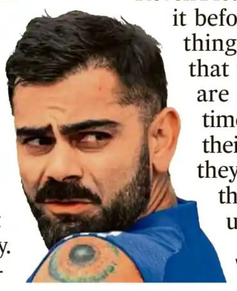
Batting superstar Virat Kohli was candid enough to admit that the aggressive Australian cricketing environment tested his resilience but felt that standing up to it while playing a bold brand of cricket toughened his mind and shaped his career path, besides influencing his growth as an individual.

Kohli first toured Down Under in 2011 and faced a hostile reception from the Australian crowd but he reckoned that the aggression gradually transformed into respect.

"Growing up, watching cricket as a kid when we used wake up early and watch Test cricket in Australia, you can see the ball flying of the pitch and the opposition in your face, and I used to feel, Wow, if I will able to step up in these conditions and against this opposition that's something I could be proud of as a cricketer. That's the motivation for me watching all the greats of our game from either side. Guys like Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, even Virender Sehwag, guys, whom I really looked up to," Kohli told Fox Cricket ahead of the first ODI here on Sunday. "Even the Australian set up, how they played their cricket and how they were in your face all the time, intimidating and taking the game on, that was something that really inspired me to come here and do the same. Early on I found it was easier to watch on television than be part of that hostile environment but I am really grateful to all those times because that shaped me as a cricketer and as a person as well.

"That really tests your mental strength and resilience because once you start copping it from the crowd you can't escape, you got to come back everyday," added Kohli, who got out for a naught in his return to India colours after seven months.

Kohli remembered the chats he had with former England skipper Kevin Pietersen with whom he shared dressing room with Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL, helped him prepare for Australian brand of cricket. "Guys like Keven Pietersen who copped it before told me something about Australia that you feel like they are at you the whole time but at the back of their minds and hearts they really appreciate that you are standing up," Kohli said.



Virat Kohli

JSC prevail over Mangalore BC

BENGALURU, DHNS: JSC defeated Mangalore BC 76-67 in a close encounter during the latest round of the State 'A' Division league championship for the NC Parappa Memorial Rolling Trophy at the Beagles Indoor Stadium courts here on Sunday.

LOCAL BASKETBALL

Rohit starred in the victory with 23 points while Prastik and Amruth impressed with 18 points each in the losing cause.

Results: JSC: 76 (Rohit 23 points) bt Mangalore BC: 67 (Prastik 18, Amruth 18), HT: 35-50; Young Orion's SC: 97 (Nathan 20, Shashank 19) bt MNK Rao Park BC: 60 (Ujwal 18, Vashist 13), HT: 40-28; Bank of Baroda: 95 (Anil Kumar 26, Harish 21) bt S Blues: 82 (Adithya 21, Ranganath 21), HT: 46-46; Beagles BC: 93 (Pratham 34, Achintya 23) bt Vivek's SC: 63 (Vinod 18, James 12), HT: 52-26.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

Women's WC: Sri Lanka vs Bangladesh (**3:00 pm**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1** & **JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: West Ham vs Brentford (**12:30 am, Tuesday**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 1** & **JioHotstar**

Fleetwood lives out a dream at DGC

World No. 5 Englishman scores two-shot win over Nakajima

HITA PRAKASH
NEW DELHI, DHNS

England's Tommy Fleetwood kisses the DP World India Championship title at the Delhi Golf Club on Sunday. DPWIC

The DP World India Championship at the hallowed Delhi Golf Club wasn't going to come to an end without some drama.

The course, as expected, made every golfer introspect, broke a few hearts and ultimately honoured the one who upheld the laws of its land the most.

At the start of the final day, England's Tommy Fleetwood trailed Japan's Keita Nakajima by two shots. Ahead of the two men in the leader group, the 18-hole layout dared them for one last time. What followed was a game of snakes and ladders between the patient duo before being challenged by a third player - an aggressor - Dan Hillier who threatened to snatch away the title.

In the end, the World No. 5 Fleetwood's class and experience overshadowed Nakajima's composure and persistence even as Hillier lost steam midway for the Englishman to become the first winner of the inaugural $4 million event here on Sunday.

Besides the lone bogey on the second hole, Fleetwood kept his cool on an unusually hot and humid day to knock in eight birdies and return a card of seven-under 65. The 34-year-old's last day score along with his previous three rounds of 68-64-69 saw him finish at a four-day total of 22-under 266 on the par-72 course.

Nakajima did well to stay away from dropping a single shot but gaining as many as he should have didn't come by. The 25-year-old mustered to make only three birdies to finish his final day at three-under 69 (65-69-65) for a total of 20-under to be the runner-up for the week.

The day got interesting as it progressed when the challengers, each on different holes, decided to draw attention away from the two-way battle at the top. Shane Lowry hung in there well but failed to replicate his day one 'A' game. The Irishman's threat eventually fizzled out for him to end at 18-under (64-69-69-68) to be tied-3rd along with England's Alex Fitzpatrick (69-67-67-67) and South Africa's Thriston Lawrence (69-67-69-65).

Of the chasing pack, it was Hillier who went all out to give himself a real chance at the top prize. The New Zealander, who was tied-4th after three rounds, made a dream start by shooting seven birdies on the first 10 holes. Playing in a group two ahead of Fleetwood and Nakajima's, Hillier's aggressive approach was beginning to take shape. Until DCG decided to strike back in the par-5 14th hole when he went into the jungle on his second shot. A double bogey here followed by a bogey on the 15th put him out of contention.

Meanwhile, as his closest competitors dropped out of the race one after the other, Fleetwood held his ground, executed his game plan to perfection to remain the last one standing at the biggest international golf event in India till date.

And for those who are wondering how Rory McIlroy fared, the five-time Major champion was tied-26th (69-69-68-71). The reigning Masters champion might have not found the right formula to tame DGC but he had the biggest crowds following him.

Final scores (after 72 holes): 266: Tommy Fleetwood (Eng, 68-64-69-65); **268:** Keita Nakajima (Jpn, 65-69-65-69); **270:** Shane Lowry (Ire, 64-69-69-68), Alex Fitzpatrick (Eng, 69-67-67-67), Thriston Lawrence (SA, 69-67-69-65).

Panwar stars in Asian meet

NEW DELHI, PTI

Olympian Balraj Panwar spearheaded India's impressive show at the Asian Rowing Championships in Hai Phong, Vietnam, as the country bagged 10 medals (including three gold and five silver), marking one of their strongest performances in recent years.

Paris Olympian Panwar produced a commanding show to win the gold in the men's single scull (M1X) event. India's other gold medals came through the lightweight men's double scull (LM2X) pair of Lakshay and Ajay Tyagi, who combined superb rhythm and endurance to dominate their final, and in the men's quadruple scull (M4X), where the quartet of Kulwinder Singh, Navdeep Singh, Satnam Singh and Jakar Khan rowed with perfect coordination to clinch the top spot.

Balraj Panwar won the gold in the men's single scull (M1X) event while Indian rowers bagged two further top spots. AP/PTI

Another highlight of the campaign was Gurbani Kaur and Diljot Kaur ending a 15-year medal drought for Indian women at the Asian Championships by finishing second in the lightweight women's pair (LW2-) event.

Their silver-winning effort, marked by technical precision and sheer grit, was hailed as a breakthrough moment for women's rowing in India and an inspiration for the next generation.

Verstappen seals US GP pole

AUSTIN, AFP: Max Verstappen continued to apply pressure on McLaren's duelling title rivals on Saturday when, hours after winning the sprint race, he claimed pole position for Sunday's United States Grand Prix.

Red Bull's four-time world champion was at his most authoritative as he clocked a best lap in one minute and 32.510 seconds to outpace McLaren's Lando Norris by 0.291 seconds with Charles Leclerc taking third on the grid for Ferrari.

With his sprint win, Verstappen trimmed series leader Oscar Piastri's lead in the title race to 55 points as the two McLarens collided and crashed out at the first corner. Norris remained 22 points adrift of Piastri.

Mercedes' George Russell was fourth ahead of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Ferrari, followed by Piastri, Italian teenage rookie Kimi Antonelli in the second Mercedes and rookie Oliver Bearman.

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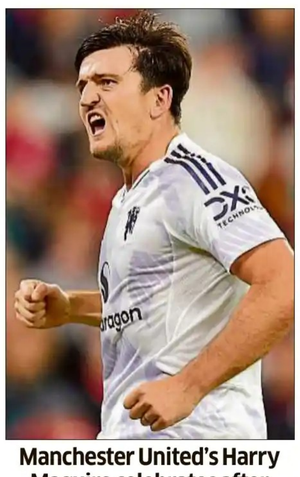

Manchester United's Harry Maguire celebrates after scoring the winner against Liverpool. AFP

Red Devils slay ragged Liverpool

LIVERPOOL, AFP

Liverpool slumped to a fourth consecutive defeat for the first time in 11 years as Manchester United won 2-1 on Sunday to end their near decade-long wait for victory at Anfield.

Harry Maguire's 84th-minute header secured back-to-back Premier League wins for the first time in Ruben Amorim's tenure as United boss. Twelve minutes from time, Cody Gakpo had cancelled out Bryan Mbeumo's opener after just 61 seconds. Defeat leaves Liverpool four points adrift of Arsenal at the top of the table and Arne Slot still searching for answers in how to get the right blend after splashing out nearly £450 million ($604 million) on new players in the transfer market.

United close to within two points of their historic rivals and up to ninth in the table to ease the pressure on Amorim after his biggest win in nearly a year in charge.

Liverpool had only lost one of the previous 14 Premier League meetings between the sides and United had not tasted victory at Anfield since the early days of Jurgen Klopp's reign in January 2016.

However, the Reds are in a state of flux after transforming the squad that stormed to the title last season and the tragic loss of Diogo Jota, who died in a car accident in July.

After three consecutive defeats for the first time in Slot's reign, Liverpool could barely have imagined a worse start.

Morgan Rogers and Emiliano Buendia inspired Aston Villa's fightback to win 2-1 against Tottenham on Sunday as the north Londoners suffered more misery on home turf.

Rodrigo Bentancur put Thomas Frank's side ahead early in the first half at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. But Rogers equalised with a superb strike before the interval and Buendia came off the bench to seal the points in the closing stages.

Results: Liverpool: 1 (Gakpo 78th) lt to Manchester United: 2 (Mbeumo 2nd, Maguire 84th); Tottenham: 1 (Bentancur 5th) lt to Aston Villa: 2 (Rogers 37th, Buendia 77th).

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